Yale Daily News

NFL
PATRIOTS 29
BILLS 26

MLB
BRAVES 3
DODGERS 2

NBA
JAZZ 109
NUGGETS 97

NHL
KRAKEN 6
FLAMES 1

SPORTS

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"Part of our mission is to try to bring people together and create community."
CAROL LOPEZ-HORSFORD

From wall sprints to Wall Street: Ivy athletes fill finance firms

BY BEATRIX LOZACH
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER



STEWART ROYAL / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Following the publication of a National Bureau of Economics Research study on the Ivy League athlete-to-finance pipeline, Yale athletes said their varsity athletic experiences assisted them when recruiting for positions in the industry.

A recent study from the National Bureau of Economics Research analyzed the influence of Ivy League athletic networks on the careers pursued by former athletes.

In July 2026, the bureau released "From Field to Firm," a study co-authored by Harvard Business School professor Paul Gompers and three doctoral students, which analyzed the probabilities of Ivy athletes joining finance firms based on social ties. It found that the baseline matching probability for athletes increased by 186.04 percent when same-team alumni were present.

The study also found that the likelihood of an athlete joining a firm was significantly higher if a member of that firm played the same sport — 18.61 percent — than if a member of that firm attended the same university as an athlete — 4.60 percent.

"What this paper, 'From Field to Firm,' is trying to show is that it's not an old boys club, and it's more like a roster. Sharing a roster is what matters," Sachin Srivastava, a co-author of the study, said in a video interview. "This paper is trying to disentangle and weed out that effect a little."

Srivastava's work on "From Field to Firm" was not his first attempt at answering this sort of question. He served as a research assistant on a 2023 study, "No Revenge for Nerds," co-authored by Gompers, which found that athletes outperform non-athlete alumni peers in the job market due to social capital. As a former college swimmer, Srivastava said he saw how athletics influenced his own opportunities.

"It influenced my curiosity in a way," Srivastava said. "This paper was the highlight of my pre-doc, and it kept me motivated very, very intuitively, because I could see the premium. I could see the effect in my own personal life, too, that the conversations change when I tell people, 'Hey, I used to be an athlete myself.'"

Defensive back Ty Ingram-Eiser '28 said he benefited from a Yale football alumni network, which uses a Slack group chat to send out opportunities to team members.

"I actually got my Bank of America internship because a former Yale football player who now works at Bank of America put his number in the chat and said, 'Hey, if anyone's interested in investment banking, please give me a call,'" Ingram-Eiser said.

Ingram-Eiser said that alumni mentoring of student athletes emerges from a sense of camaraderie and shared community.

"There's a certain pride that comes with being an athlete here at an Ivy League school, especially here at Yale, and there's a feeling of liking to take care of our own," Ingram-Eiser said. "I definitely felt when I was speaking to other former athletes here at Yale, especially if it was my own sport, their eyes would light up, and all of a sudden they really wanted to talk to you."

The alumni network presents an opportunity for people who may not have familial connections to enter the network-dependent field. Ingram-Eiser was not raised by parents in finance, and neither were many of his teammates.

"At least from a football perspective, a lot of the kids on my team come from incredibly different backgrounds," Ingram-Eiser said. "Of course there's probably a little bit of favoritism in there and the shared experience piece, but I also think student athletes in general are probably a little bit more prepared for the demands of these early roles."

Ingram-Eiser, who initially committed to Yale for lacrosse and walked onto the football team, said finance also carries an allure for student athletes because it allows them to remain driven.

"I think it's attractive to student athletes because it helps them be competitive still," Ingram-Eiser said. "It gives them kind of a collegiate team-like environment for the most part, and yeah, it's kind of the next step after college athletics for many people as they see it."

Heavyweight rower Alek Balassa '27 said long hours of training prepared him for the workload that comes with a finance internship.

"Being disciplined and working a lot of hours is a lot of what the world entails," Balassa said.

His interest in finance, he said, originally started when he took Intermediate Microeconomics with professor John Geanakoplos '75.

"It was the higher level economics class I was looking for," Balassa said. "If you did well in the first midterm, he emailed you an interview for an offer at a hedge fund. That was some initial part of the relationship where I thought it was nice having a professor reach out like that."

While Balassa didn't accept the offer, he later went on to conduct research on Social Security reform with Geanakoplos as a Tobin Undergraduate Research Assistant. He credits his sports background with helping him rapidly adjust to feedback in research and internships.

"Making the same mistake twice is honestly the worst thing you can do in sports or finance," Balassa said. "It definitely helped, my experience in athletics, not to take that criticism personally or let it affect my performance."

Yale has 805 total athletes across all sports.

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This street by Payne Whitney saves time, creates community for athletes

BY LUCY BENJAMIN
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER



LUCY BENJAMIN / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

The "iconic" tradition of Yale athletes living on Lake Place unites teammates, makes early morning practices more manageable and connects athletes to the broader New Haven community.

For generations of Yale athletes, Lake Place has become more than a street just west of Payne Whitney Gymnasium.

With houses associated with teams such as crew, swim and lacrosse lining the block, the street has developed a reputation as a hub for Yale athletes living off campus. For Carol Lopez-Horsford — the founder of Farnam Realty Group, which owns and manages several properties on Lake Place — the high concentration of athletes on that street is nothing new, and the explanation for the clustering is relatively simple: location.

"I think the most important thing to undergrads is convenience," Lopez-Horsford said in an interview. "They just want to be near where they have to be."

With Payne Whitney just around the corner, athletes who spend hours each day practicing, lifting and training in the gymnasium find ultimate convenience on Lake Place.

Over time, certain properties have become associated with particular teams. Lopez-Horsford identified four addresses on Lake Place with the heavyweight crew, lightweight crew, swim and lacrosse teams.

For the athletes, however, the appeal of Lake Place extends beyond the short walk to practice.

Will Fenton '28, a member of the men's heavyweight crew team who lives on Lake Place, said being surrounded by teammates and other athletes has made the street distinctly social.

"You see a bunch of people when you're walking down the street that you know," Fenton said in a phone interview. "It's very socially active."

Fenton said some of his favorite moments have come not from a particular event, but from the ordinary time he gets to spend with his teammates outside of practice.

"Being able to spend time with my team outside of our practice schedule, being able to spend free time with our team in our backyard, is just a great memory," Fenton said, adding that the culture of Lake Place is "iconic."

Joey Felton '25, a former Yale football player who now works as a realtor with Farnam, similarly described Lake Place as a central location where athletes from different corners of Yale regularly cross paths.

"It's good proximity," Felton said in an interview. "You get to meet all the different athletes. You have all the different groups and you get to just hang out and enjoy your time."

Felton compared the street to "frat row at a state school," but added that the dynamic is distinctly shaped by Yale.

Still, the concentration of athletes on Lake Place does not mean the street operates as an isolated athlete bubble.

Lopez-Horsford said she views convenience, more than the desire to exclusively live among athletes, as the primary reason teams have gravitated toward the area.

"It's a full-time job to be a D1 athlete," Lopez-Horsford said. "They're either at class, at lift, at practice or sleeping with very little time for socializing or grabbing meals at dining halls. They're freaking busy."

With limited free time between classes, lifts, practices and sleep, athletes living on the street still engage with the broader Yale community.

"You still have your other cohorts of friends that you see for dinner," Fenton said. "You definitely make time to see them in other parts of your day."

Lake Place itself is also not exclusively athletic. Fenton lives in a nearby apartment building that is open to athletes and non-athletes, while Lopez-Horsford also noted that graduate students and other Yale affiliates live throughout the area.

The long-running relationship between Yale athletes and the properties around Lake Place has also extended beyond housing.

Lopez-Horsford said Farnam has increasingly looked for ways to support athletes who live in its properties, including hosting a hospitality suite for athletes' parents, working with players at community events and offering internships to student-athletes.

"As a landlord, I've been trying to do whatever I can to give back to the students that live in the houses," Lopez-Horsford said.

Felton was Farnam's first student-athlete intern. With summer opportunities difficult for athletes to organize around training and other commitments, Felton said he is grateful for his time interning at Farnam.

After he began working at the company, some of his teammates soon followed suit, helping residents move in, setting up utilities and learning about the business.

Felton ultimately returned to Farnam full-time after graduating, earned his real estate license and now works for the company as an agent.

Lopez-Horsford's involvement with Yale athletes extends beyond the company. An avid sports fan, Lopez-Horsford and her family are Bulldog faithfuls, frequently appearing in the stands to cheer on the Bulldogs.

Farnam has worked with Yale basketball and football players at community events, including the annual Faxon Law New Haven Road Race, where athletes, including Team 153 captain Abu Kamara '27, have signed autographs and interacted with local families. Lopez-Horsford said the company has also worked to bring athletes into local schools and encourage New Haven residents to attend Yale sporting events.

"Part of our mission is to try to bring people together and create community and support all our tenants where we can," Lopez-Horsford said.

That effort will continue this fall, where Yale men's basketball will welcome members of the New Haven community to John J. Lee Amphitheater for free in an effort to extend the athletic community that has developed around Lake Place into the city.

"This is huge because they're gonna play Howard at home on November 2. There's no school the next day because of Election Day, so we're hoping to get a huge turnout," Lopez-Horsford said.

The Bulldogs will play the Howard Bison at 1 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 2 at the John J. Lee Amphitheater.

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STAT OF THE DAY: 4 TOUCHDOWNS SCORED BY DANTE RENO ON SATURDAY