

# Northwest Federal Credit Union and George Mason Athletics Expand Partnership to Advance Student Financial Wellness

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- George Mason Athletics and Northwest Federal Credit Union announced an expanded partnership that connects student-athletes with financial education, simple banking tools, and Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) opportunities designed to support their success on campus, in the community, and after they graduate.



This enhanced collaboration was formally introduced at Mason's inaugural Basketball Signing Day event. More than 200 fans, supporters, and community leaders gathered to celebrate the introduction of the 2026-27 men's and women's basketball teams.

As the Official Credit Union and Financial Wellness Partner for Mason Athletics, Northwest is expanding its support beyond traditional sponsorship by helping student-athletes build financial confidence at a time when NIL earnings, personal branding, and early career decisions are becoming part of the college athletics experience. Participating student-athletes will open Northwest accounts, receive financial education and training, and serve as ambassadors promoting financial literacy across campus and throughout the Northern Virginia community.

"This expanded partnership marks an exciting step forward in how we support student athletes during a pivotal moment in their journey," said Jeff Bentley, President & CEO at Northwest Federal Credit Union. "By combining these new NIL opportunities with financial education, we are helping equip them with the tools to make informed decisions today and build lasting success beyond the game. These student-athletes are inspiring the next generation, and Northwest is grateful to be part of making an impact in the community."

"Opportunities like this give our players experience in pursuing their sports career while also

learning the practical skills to balance life," said Tony Skinn ('06), men's head basketball coach at GMU. "Having access to financial education, professional development, and community connections helps maximize their time here at George Mason and set them up for the next chapter. Northwest has been an excellent partner to make that a reality for our teams."

Women's basketball head coach Vanessa Blair-Lewis added, "This is about developing the whole person. Even the term student-athlete represents our hope for each of these young people. We want their time with us to have been a season of life where they were fully supported to learn the most they can and be the best they can be. Financial education and life management resources are a critical part of that vision of helping our student-athletes build strong futures."

Northwest's Jeff Bentley, George Mason's Assistant Vice President & Director of Athletics Marvin Lewis, and both teams' coaches shared additional remarks at the event before the evening concluded with a meet-and-greet with the student-athletes, fans, and coaches.

The Basketball Signing Day event is expected to become an annual tradition and serves as the first of several collaborative initiatives planned between Mason Athletics and Northwest throughout the upcoming year. Through this partnership expansion, the credit union also became the first member of the "Starting 5" sponsors of George Mason Athletics' broader corporate partnership platform, NOVA's Team, which connects organizations committed to building a stronger connection between student-athletes, businesses, and communities across Northern Virginia.

#### About George Mason Athletics

George Mason Athletics unites communities by developing champions with a mission to inspire and transform lives through the power of sports. Mason Athletics serves 500 student-athletes in 22 NCAA Division I sports. We are a proud member of the Atlantic 10 Conference with over 20 Conference Championships, NCAA Championships in Women's Soccer and Men's Indoor Track, an NCAA appearance in Women's Basketball, and an NCAA Final Four appearance with Men's Basketball, and over 30 individual National Champions. We are student-focused, education-centered, and committed to providing transformational experiences for our student-athletes and staff.

#### About Northwest Federal Credit Union

Northwest Federal Credit Union (Northwest) is a leading financial institution dedicated to providing a comprehensive range of banking and financial services to its over 280,000 members in Virginia, Maryland, and D.C. and beyond. Established in 1947 with a focus on personalized customer service, Northwest offers a variety of products, including savings and checking accounts, loans, mortgages, and investment options. As a member-owned, non-profit organization, Northwest not only strives to enhance the financial well-being of its members nationwide, but is also integrally involved with supporting the local community through various outreach initiatives and strategic partnerships. Northwest is the Official Credit Union of the Washington Commanders and naming rights sponsor for the team's Northwest Stadium. For

more information about Northwest Federal Credit Union, visit [nwfcu.org](https://nwfcu.org). Federally insured by NCUA.

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