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## Scholarship for talented young sports coaches

**Northumbria University, Newcastle, is launching a new scholarship for talented young sport coaches and officials to study at the University and enhance their personal development and career opportunities.**

Open to students from any discipline, the Scholarship forms part of the University's [Higher Education without Barriers](#) campaign - a fund that provides support to make participation and progression in higher education more achievable for academically talented students, regardless of their social or economic circumstances. One of the projects in the first year will- support

women, who are under-represented as coaches and officials. And to encourage help from business sponsors and partner organisations, a launch event is being held on the 12<sup>th</sup> October at the University's Sport Central - to provide additional information on the Scholarship and the benefits it can bring to qualifying students.

The event will bring together students, alumni, and partners to discuss the importance of diversity in sport, the transferable skills between sport and business and the important contribution women who are sport leaders can bring to the workplace. It will be hosted by Northumbria alumnus Jon Dutton, Chief Executive of the Rugby League World Cup, which kicks off in Newcastle on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

Panel members at the event will include:

- Emma Collier, President, Northumbria Students' Union
- Dr Zoe Avner, Assistant Professor and Lecturer, Sports Coaching, Northumbria University
- Paul Blake, Northumbria alumnus/Managing Director, Newcastle Eagles
- Mark Gannon, Chief Executive, UK Coaching
- Su Cumming, Head of Women's Football, Newcastle United
- Louise Sivewright, Talent Acquisition Marketing Specialist, Enterprise Rent-a-Car

The new scholarship programme for coaches and referees is an exciting development that forms part of the University's ambitions to engage as many students as possible in sport and physical activity. Having diverse role models plays a key role in inspiring people of all abilities and interests to keep mentally and physically active. The scholarship, which is open to both undergraduate and postgraduate students, complements the University's long-standing programme of scholarships for student athletes and builds upon Northumbria's outstanding reputation in Sport. The University offers extensive health, fitness, and sport participation programmes, has won two national volunteering awards and was one of the first universities in the UK to offer sport degrees over 40 years ago. It has also built an excellent reputation for research and consultancy. Results from the Research Excellence Framework (REF2021) show Northumbria University with the largest rise in research power ranking of any UK university, with Sport and Exercise Sciences research rated seventh, nationally, for impact.

Michael Wood, Senior Lecturer in Sport Management at Northumbria, said: “The new scholarship for female coaches and officials is all about opening doors and opportunities, especially for students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds. This project reflects our drive to increase gender equality and diversity in sport. Significant progress has been made in the sector in recent times, but there are still big challenges to overcome.

“I would like to thank to Jon Dutton for taking time out in advance of the Rugby League World Cup to host this event, and to our business partners Sodexo and Enterprise Rent-A-Car, who are the first financial supporters of the scheme.”

Simon Knight, Managing Director for Sodexo Universities in the UK, added: “We are delighted to be the first co-supporter of Northumbria’s Sport Scholarship programme, which will enable students from under-represented groups to achieve their ambitions as coaches and officials and encourage other students to pursue healthy, active lives. We are keen to share our social values and commitments to enable all students to thrive at university and in the next chapter of their lives.”

Louise Sivewright, Talent Acquisition Marketing Specialist at Enterprise, added, *“Enterprise Rent-A-Car is proud to support this wonderful initiative and provide students at Northumbria the opportunity to enhance their university experience and education.”*

A fundraising and networking dinner to support and showcase all aspects of Sport at Northumbria will be held at St James’ Park next year.

[Click here](#) to book a place at the launch on 12<sup>th</sup> October. For more information on the Sport Scholarship programme, the launch event or next year’s dinner please contact Sue Vout, Trust and Foundation Manager, at [sue.vout@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:sue.vout@northumbria.ac.uk).

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