

## The First in Their Family

In the most recent [NCAA GOALS study](#), 16% of student-athletes reported being first-generation college students (defined here as neither parent having attended college).

**Who is most likely to be a first-generation student?** Division II student-athletes (20%) are more likely to be first-generation students than either Division I (14%) or Division III (15%) student-athletes. Football (25%) and wrestling (23%) have the highest percentages of such students in the NCAA. Twelve percent of white student-athletes and 26% of student-athletes from a racial/ethnic minority group report being first-generation college students.

**Do athletics play a role in their opportunity to attend college?** Only 47% of first-generation students strongly agreed they would have attended a four-year college had they not been an athlete, compared with 62% of student-athletes who are not first-generation students.

**Who assists first-generation students in choosing a college?** Across all segments of the student-athlete population, parents are reported as playing the most important role in the college choice process. However, both coaches and teachers / guidance counselors are credited with playing a larger role in the college choice process for first-generation students as compared to their non-first-generation peers.

**Do the parents of first-generation students have different athletics expectations?** Twenty-six percent of NCAA first-generation students reported that since they were young, their parents/family expected they would eventually become professional or Olympic athletes. Only 12% of their non-first-generation peers reported that same parental expectation.

**What are the future plans of first-generation students?** Most (93%) first-generation student-athletes are confident that they will graduate from college. However, they are less likely to believe they will eventually attend graduate school (58%) than other student-athletes (68%). First-generation students are more likely to believe they will become a professional or Olympic athlete and that their future jobs will involve sports in some form.

**Do first-generation students have bigger financial concerns than their peers?** Financing their education is a larger concern for this population. Whereas 56% of first-generation students are concerned finances could affect their ability to finish their degree, only 36% of other student-athletes feel the same way. Additionally, how these students finance their education differs from their non-first-generation peers (see chart).

