

## Testimonials

**I** fully support Athlete Connections and have personally told Dan Cross that I will help in get into universities across the country because I believe this organization is something that is needed". Keith Tribble – Athletic Director, University of Central Florida

**T**he transition was my biggest fear. "Most athletes feel that once they finish their career, they don't have to work for somebody else. It's that jolt to the system that you have to recover from at first. I went through a period of vulnerability. I had been in so much control of my life, been the star, the focal point, and then I go into completely uncharted waters -- the working world. It was just such a scary time."After turning to Athlete Connections it helped me refocus and plan my attack on how to prepare for my next career. It also helped me translate my marketable qualities into the work force. Darryl Hardy – European Pro Ball

**A**t the end of college, not only have "[athletes] learned and upgraded their functional skill set, but they have learned . . . commitment and dedication, and they understand what it takes to hit deadlines and to win."These athletes will become future leaders, if they get the right guidance from resources like Athlete Connections as they merge into the marketplace."  
Denise Walls, Partner- Vaco Resources

**T**he NBA only drafts about 60 college players each year — and University of Central Florida has had 1 player drafted. But many of his students remain convinced they will make it. "There are so many students who were just like me. They are so focused on their game and their routine they never think about what they're going to do next".

"For every two students who recognize that they need a backup plan there's that one who you can't get through to. "It took me about a half a year just to figure out what I was gonna do. "I was stuck in transition before landing the job at UCF. I had to change my thoughts Athlete Connections is a great resource and service to coaches, student athletes and universities. I wish we had this when I graduated from school". Craig Brown – Graduate of University of Florida & asst. men's basketball coach at University of Central Florida

**S**tudent athletes are taught to focus on plan A which does not leave a lot of time to focus on plan B while you are a collegiate student athlete. To focus on a plan B as an athlete is like admitting failure. Athlete Connections has prepared me to assess my strengths and weaknesses and transfer my skills to the workforce". -James Harper, Graduate of University of South Florida

**I** knew I had done everything in my power to ensure that I would find a great job when I graduated playing soccer from the University of Tennessee. The thought never crossed my mind that I would struggle from playing sports to transitioning to the business world. For the first time, I began doubting my own abilities, experience and resume. Luckily, that is when I met Dan Cross, Founder and CEO of Athlete Connections. The timing of that 'connection' couldn't have been better. Being a former student athlete himself, he was able to relate to everything I was going through and shared stories about many student athletes who were going through the same transitions.

The truth of the matter was that no resume could explain the grueling schedules we had while competing, or the dedication we had shown in academics and personal growth. We simply needed to meet professionals who were interested in hiring athletes with the passion, determination and commitment that most student-athletes naturally possess.

I can proudly say that I am writing this from an oceanfront balcony in Myrtle Beach, SC where I am about to start my exciting career in marketing with Wyndham Vacation Ownership. I can't thank Athlete Connections enough for the support, mentorship, networking and employment opportunities they provided me. I urge all current and former student-athletes to get involved with AC because it will provide each and every one of you with the tools you need to find YOUR perfect career! Melissa Amado- Graduate of University of Tennessee 2008

**T**hanks Dan for taking the time to come talk to the players. These young men need to hear what happens when that basketball goes FLAT!!! They need a back up plan. I'm on them hard to work hard off the court and put themselves in a position to graduate. I'm working on my Master's myself, even coaching is not forever.Thank you, Ken Johnson, University of Tennessee, Director of Basketball Operations

**T**hank you for hosting the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual University of Florida Athlete Connections Networking Event for our athlete's. Also, your partnership with our 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Summer Recruiting Roundtable was key to our success". I think everything was awesome and I look forward to continuing to work with Athlete Connections. Rew Woodruff, Ed.S., University of Florida, Life Skills Coordinator- Career Counselor

**T**hank you for your contribution to our University of Tennessee 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Networking Event Night for our student athletes. Our event was very successful and could not have been done without you. We greatly appreciate your time and commitment to the career development of our student athletes. Our athletes enjoyed meeting with you and appreciated the feedback you provided them. We look forward to working with Athlete Connections in the future". Jacqui Schuman- Champs Life Skills Program, University of Tennessee