

Wrestling Grant Interim Report Summary

Passed in 2023, the “Charles Cate II Act (SB5687)” established the postsecondary wrestling grant program, allocating funds to public institutions to support activities related to establishing or maintaining intercollegiate wrestling programs.

Beginning November 1, 2023, funds were made available via WSAC’s [Wrestling Grant Program Application](#). Applications were reviewed by a cross-sector committee and were awarded to Big Bend Community College, Grays Harbor College, the Evergreen State College, Washington State University, and Western Washington University, totaling \$257,000. Intercollegiate programs range from club teams to varsity teams housed in athletic departments.

Funds were allocated in full to each institution, with the grant period through May 31, 2025. As a multi-year grant, participating institutions submitted interim reports at the conclusion of the 2023-24 academic year. These reports were used to compile this document.

Highlights

- 151 students participated in men’s and women’s wrestling programs during the 2023-24 Academic Year

Gender	Number of Wrestlers
Women*	59
Men	92

* Includes nonbinary students.

- Funds were commonly used for construction and facilities maintenance, updating equipment, team uniforms, travel for athletes, and supporting paid coaching positions. Investments made in equipment and facilities renovations were described as critically important to student safety and student experience.
- Women’s wrestling is growing both in the state and nationwide; funds supported colleges and universities in growing women’s teams.
- Funds minimized out-of-pocket student spending and reduced fundraising pressures, particularly for teams that are student-run clubs.

“The ability to establish an adequate and dedicated wrestling room has had a positive impact on the recruitment of student-athletes, some of whom might not otherwise consider a public, liberal arts education. This has enhanced the diversity of students coming to Evergreen, which aligns with the mission of serving the South Sound region. It has also enhanced Evergreen’s ability to retain the students we recruited.” - The Evergreen State College

Institutional Narratives

Big Bend Community College

Big Bend Community College's award supported construction and facilities upgrades for the wrestling program, including the purchasing of new mats, subflooring, and wall construction. The facilities improvements were key components of program maintenance.

The Evergreen State College

The Evergreen State College's award supported the conversion of a multi-purpose, shared dance space into a dedicated wrestling space for both the men's and women's teams to use for training. Additional equipment was purchased to support training specific to wrestling and Evergreen's ability to host home contests as well as new uniforms for both teams.

Grays Harbor College

Grays Harbor College's (GHC) award supported equipment and supplies, coaching salaries/benefits, and travel and competition. This included upgrading essential training equipment such as new weights and protective gear and hiring additional coaching staff, including specialized coaches for women's wrestling. The expansion of coaching staff created more individualized attention for athletes which in turn helped develop technical skills, strategies, and overall team performance. Finally, the funds enabled GHC to expand the scope of the competition schedule, contributing to athletes' growth, personal milestones, and national qualifications.

Western Washington University

Western Washington University's (WWU) award supports a student-run club wrestling team seeking to grow their program. Funds were used to support team travel to the NCWA National Championships in Louisiana. Qualifying wrestlers and their coach were able to travel without requiring student-athletes to contribute additional funds out of pocket. WWU believes that in addition to the direct support for student and coach engagement, the visibility within the nationwide wrestling community will help recruit and retain wrestlers in the future.

Washington State University

Washington State University's (WSU) award supports varsity club wrestling, one of the largest wrestling teams in NCWA. The funds from this grant helped support a paid head coaching position critical to sustaining the program. The grant also supported the purchase of a certified scale for practices and competitions for the women's team, travel funds for men's competition travel to Iowa, and travel support for all national championship qualifiers and coaches at the 2024 NCWA National Championships in Louisiana. WSU attributes these funds to enabling the success of the WSU team winning the 2024 NWCA College Cup National Championship.

"This grant removed financial stress from athletes. It supported a fast-growing women's team and already robust men's team." - Washington State University
