

# PLU CREW



2006-2007

MEDIA GUIDE





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# QUICK FACTS



**HEAD COACH:** Tone Lawver

(PLU, 1995; Harvard, 1998)

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**WEB SITE:** www.plu.edu/~crew

**RECORD AT CURRENT SCHOOL**

**(YEARS):** 12-6-0 (4th)

**OVERALL COLLEGIATE RECORD**

**(YEARS):** 12-6-0 (4th)

**2005-2006 RECORD:** 3-3

**COACHING STAFF**

• Beth Henderson, Assistant Mens Coach  
(LMU 2005)

• Coree Naslund, Assistant Womens  
Coach (WWU 2006)

• Amy Hildebrandt, Novice Mens Coach  
(PLU, 2005)

• Sarah Salisbury, Novice Women Coach  
(PLU, 2006)

**SPORTS INFORMATION**

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**HOME COURSE:**

American Lake, Lakewood

**CONFERENCE:** Northwest  
Collegiate Rowing Conference

**NCAA DIVISION III:**

Pacific Region

**KEY RETURNEES**

*Men Openweight:* Cale Zimmerman '09

*Men Lightweight:* Justin Hull '08

*Women Openweight:* Andrea Schroeder '07;

Kat Jenkins '09; Amber Iverson '09

*Women Lightweight:* Audrey Knutson '07;

Jenna Hannity '07; Jenna Hannity '07; Sarah

Shanebeck '09 ; Katie Allen '09

**KEY LOSSES**

*Men Openweight:* James Blankenship '06;

Asher Ryan White '06

*Women Openweight:* Katie Schlepp '06;

Laura Ruud '06; Blaise Bellows '06; Sarah  
Salisbury '06

*Women Lightweight:* Erin Wolf '06 ; Nicole  
Swanson '06; Sharon Maloney '06

# DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS

ADAPTIVE ROWING TECHNIQUES ENABLE VARSITY STUDENT-ATHLETE

By Dave Girrard

Entering her first year at Pacific Lutheran University, Natalie McCarthy didn't think participating in inter-collegiate athletics was an option.

Although she had been a member of the track team at Steilacoom High School – competing in the 100, 200 and long jump – McCarthy didn't think her ability level was high enough for PLU. "In high school I was on the track team and enjoyed being on a team, but didn't think I was quite what the track team here at PLU was looking for," she said. "Someone suggested that if I liked sports I should try crew. So I decided to check it out."



There was one wrinkle, however. McCarthy is legally blind.

After struggling with vision and stomach problems, balance issues and severe headaches for "a long amount of time," McCarthy's parents finally convinced her to see a doctor. She underwent surgery the very next day.

The doctor found an astrocytoma, a type of brain tumor. Removing the tumor caused damage to the optic nerve because of a loss of blood flow. McCarthy was 10 years old at the time. She can tell the difference between light and dark, and see motion. Some colors also stand out.

PLU head coach Tone Lawver said the initial step was making the boats, oars and other equipment ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant. "Adaptive rowing has been around for awhile," he said. "It actually got its start from a PLU alum, Doug Herland. The principals for Natalie were to develop a system by which she could assimilate as quickly and easily as possible with the other rowers."

The first step was teaching her the proper rowing technique.

"One of the tools we used early on was to have her feel a person actually rowing on an 'erg' (a rowing machine) and then break down the rowing stroke into its basic component sequenc-

ing," said Lawver. "We worked with her to develop a rhythm," added assistant coach Megan Carns.

Next, each of the oars and boats she would be using was labeled using a braille labeler. "This would enable her to quickly check to identify what boat she was in and what seat. It also allowed her to determine what position the blade was in," Lawver said.

"It took a while at first to really get it down and then stay in-sync with the other rowers," McCarthy said. "But after a while it comes, when you start to really pay attention to your surroundings and start to listen to other people. And it helps when there's someone who can make sure you're aligned and make sure you're on-target at first. Once you start out well it clicks.

"And you can feel the motion, when you need to put your oar in the water. I think listening comes into play more than feeling, but I think feeling is definitely a portion of it," she said.

The team also did weight training and running and were given some handouts to read. "She had some experience with weights, and her teammates helped with that," said Carns. "She did all of the workouts, with a teammate.

"It was a whole new thing, learning how to teach her," Carns said.

McCarthy was able to compete in the one regatta the women's team entered during the fall, the Charlie Brown Invitational in Portland, Ore. She was part of the Novice Women's 8+ squad that finished fourth in their race. Carns said McCarthy, by listening to the other rowers, was able to pick up the tempo pretty quick.

McCarthy said her teammates have been great. "They've been very helpful and accomodating, and never treated me like anything other than just another teammate. And so I really appreciate that. And the coaches have been great and helpful and willing to try new ideas to make things work. So I've been really lucky."

She said she doesn't even mind the early-morning practices. "No, it's not too bad. The hard part is sitting in class after practice."

# PART OF THE CREW

## A ROWER COMES OUT

By Ryan White, For *Outsports.com*, October 5, 2006

In my sophomore year, I dated one of my best friends, Sharon, for around a month. At this time I was also a resident assistant and a member of the varsity crew team at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Wash.

During the first couple of weeks things were great and we both respected the space we were accustomed to as well as spending quality time together. In the back of my mind I was not sure what I was doing or why I was doing it. For me it seemed like the right thing to do and that it was the next step of our relationship as friends.

I knew Sharon was onto my secret when she had to pin me down to make me kiss her, and then hear her say that I never wanted to touch her much beyond holding hands. She knew the one thing that I had tried to kill for so many years: I was gay. I told her that I needed to take some time and go away for a bit. I left on a Friday after classes with two of my other friends, Nathan and Sarah.

We had planned a secret trip to talk about how awful things had been going for us that semester. Our trip was a 1,000-mile road trip into Canada and back. We had no real plans beyond getting there and seeing some sights. I returned home to find an e-mail from Sharon saying that she and I were done and that she couldn't believe that Sarah and I had destroyed our friendship with her just so we could be together.

What she didn't understand is that Sarah and I were supposed to spend the trip talking about how I was to handle telling Sharon that I loved her deeply but to be with her was to kill a part of myself each time I lied.

Sharon and I broke up in November. Three weeks later was finals week and Sarah and I had still not had the conversation about my sexuality. One night, Sarah looked at me, cocked her head and said, "Ryan, I will talk to you tomorrow." With that statement I knew that she knew and all the pieces had finally fit together on why Sharon and I hadn't worked out and why the whole time I was with her I wouldn't touch her.

The afternoon of Tuesday Dec. 17, 2003, was the first time I ever talked with someone openly about whom and what I was. I remember the extreme fear and hopelessness as Sarah and I walked Tule Loop on campus. I was so scared that she would leave me on the street and never talk to me again. It was the same road that transformed me into a rower and was now transforming my life as I came out for the first time.

My transformation to a rower was not as hard as some others on the team. In high school and in junior high I was involved in football, basketball, track and golf. It wasn't until I had gradu-

ated from high school that I really appreciated running and endurance sports. I guess that was part of my draw towards crew. I didn't start rowing until I was in college.

In my first year with the crew team I developed a family away from home. I believe that if it wasn't for them and my connection to the team that I wouldn't have stayed at PLU. I worked so hard to be the best I could be. I remember running hills in the middle of the winter rains by myself just to get better. In the following spring it paid off and I was elected captain of the novice men's team.

### Revealing a Secret

Sarah and Sharon are both rowers as well and because of this they are two of my best friends. The more Sarah and I walked the loop the more she learned about the first 20 years of life. She learned about my experimenting with guys when I was younger to the repression that I had imposed on myself. She learned how I emotionally tortured myself to fit the standards of growing up in a small Wyoming town.

For me the first step was the hardest. I don't think I have ever felt so alone in all my life than I did that night. I laid in Sarah's lap crying for hours. I cried because I was set free but at the same time I had opened a whole side of my existence that I had kept in a dark corner for far too long.

I cried because for me what it meant to be gay was to be hated for something that you had no control over and to die alone without the love of a spouse. I cried most of all because for me death was analogous with gay and to be gay was to die a long and painful death. The killing of Mathew Sheppard and seeing the fallout from it in my hometown, just 300 miles away, shaped my view of the gay world.

I strongly thought that to be gay and from Wyoming meant that my death was imminent. On Friday morning I flew home. Sarah and I agreed that it was best for me to tell my mom while I was home. I spent two weeks at home crying myself to sleep and hiding from my parents.

I remember that Christmas my uncle looked at me and said, "There is something very West Coast about you now, but I can't put my finger on it." In the back of my mind I was terrified that he knew and was about to say something to my family. I also had to endure my two cousins, who poked fun at me for all sorts of things, mostly saying that I was a girly man. This was nothing new from them. Our relationship had always been one of contention and a desire to outperform each other. So the teasing was just part of how we interacted but on this trip home it hurt more than normal and made me think that they knew my dark secret.

As my mom was preparing to leave town for New Year's Eve with my dad, I was sitting on the couch in the living room crying. She kept trying to figure out what was wrong but I wouldn't tell her. I couldn't tell her. She left not knowing.



## **Keeping a Distance**

When I got back to school a couple of days later, I returned to a world that was comfortable. A world that was planned and rigorous with workouts, class and other work. Nevertheless, I ditched my workouts with the team because I couldn't stand for them to know that I was gay. So, I developed a plan of distancing myself from the team. I figured that when they did find out, they could walk away and the pain for me wouldn't be as bad. I couldn't stand for them to reject me and send me from their lives in shame. So, I hid from them as I had hid from everyone else in my life.

As the spring season went on in 2004 I told my closest friends before others could tell them. I vividly remember telling James, my best friend and pair partner. We went to the grocery store together and he was going off about how he didn't think he could date another girl again because they just kept playing with his heart and hurting him.

He made the comment of, "Don't call Simon and tell him I am gay now. He doesn't need to fly out here and deal with me." To which I responded, "James, we handle that in house now." He looked at me as if I was crazy and then smiled at me. It was the kind of smile that said a million things without having to say a word. We talked for a couple more hours about life in general before I finally just said, "James, I am gay." His response was, "Well that makes a lot of things make more sense."

It was in the middle of spring that my mom became concerned about my mental health and summoned me home for Easter. On April 15, 2004 at 5:15 pm, I told my mom that I was gay. One of her first questions was whether it was a crew thing to be gay. I was shocked at first and then I told her that it wasn't. She then asked if she could deal with alcohol and drugs. I think that she asked me those questions because she was trying to make sense of how this had developed. She knows how to handle drugs and alcohol but she hadn't been exposed to people coming out before. It was new and scary for her. For the rest of the weekend, she would randomly break into tears. I thought that I had killed her from the way she reacted. I had caused her so much pain with just four words.

## **Redefining Myself**

After James, I didn't tell any one else at school until the summer. That was until I invited a friend to go to Gay Pride with me around the Puget Sound area and she didn't understand why I wanted to go. I made a comment about rainbows not really being my thing because I hadn't become that comfortable with myself. That summer I made it to the three major prides in the Puget Sound area: Olympia, Tacoma and Seattle. At the parade in Seattle I marched with the Human Rights Campaign. It was one of the best experiences of my life. From the parade and other experiences of the summer I learned what it was to be comfortable with myself.

That summer I also taught myself that being gay was a part of me but it wouldn't define who I was. On the mirror in my room I wrote, "I will not let part of me be all of me." Every morning I looked at it and tried to work out how I wanted to be defined as a person as well as how I wanted to define myself.

I spent the fall of 2004 hiding from the world. Being an only child I have mastered the fine art of escapism and I fled to France to continue to work on myself. While I was in France I

heard whispers of what was happening at school and that more and more people were finding out that I was gay. At first I was furious that people would feel that it was their duty in life to tell others something about me. As time went on, I came to realize that it was for the best that people were finding out when I was not around. In my mind it would give them time and space to process the fact that I had always been gay, but that I was being redefined in their eyes.

When I came back to school this January, I had no idea how I would be treated. Once again I ditched out on my January workouts as I hid once again. As the end of the month drew close, I sat down with my two captains individually and talked to them. I told them that if my sexuality became an issue, I would walk away. Their response was that it wouldn't be an issue and if it ever was that they would take care of it.

As the season went on, guys I was dating would come by and meet several members of the team and they were treated with respect and loved as if they were any of the girlfriends of the rest of the guys. I was so proud of my teammates for the way they treated people I was dating, but I was always slightly uncomfortable.

I thought that I could get away with just having my teammates meet just the most important of whom I was dating, but this past summer I moved into the Crew House and with that, my old captains and other five housemates wanted to know every guy I went out with and every guy that I brought home.

## **My Teammates Meet My Dates**

During this time they met one of my ex-boyfriends and a couple potentials for new boyfriends. My housemates also witnessed the start of new relationship as well as its breakup in the last couple weeks. It was with this relationship that they have learned that gay relationships are just like straight ones.

I had one of my old captains, now a housemate, sit me down and said, "PLU Crew is a family and you are part of that family. That means that we care about you and what to know who is involved in your life." It was with those words that my life with the crew team changed. We had always been taught that to be a member of the team was to be part of a family that was greater than you. We were also taught to be a member of the team was to be part of a legacy that started with nine guys and an unbreakable will.

It was on that day that I decided that no part of my life was to be held in shame when I was around them. They are my family, an endless chain of brothers and sisters to call my own. I know that every step I take I take it with them at my side and with them I can do anything I set my mind to.

This past summer, the guys, my teammates, my brothers got to know me as I am. They had the opportunity to know me as a gay rower who is just like all of them, and works his heart out for something greater than himself in the hopes of making the world a greater place. I have always had my doubts about whether I was considered different from the rest of the team; however, when it came to electing our captains for this year I was honored with being selected as one. I was shocked and so pleased.

I now have a passion for telling other gay athletes to do what is right for them and be honest not only with themselves but with those that care about them. Your team will love you no matter what and if they don't, then you really aren't on a team and your presence isn't as valuable as you think it is.

**ALL-AMERICAN: 4**

Erin Wolf '06

Katie Schlepp '06 (2005,2006)

Lauren Rutledge '04

Brian Erstguard '93

**OLYMPIANS: 3**

Doug Herland '72 (1984)

Elise Linborg '84 (1996)

Sarah Jones '93 (2000, 2004)

**NATIONAL TEAM  
MEMBERS/ID CAMP**

**MEMBERS: 30**

Blaise Bellows '06

Sami Beurabi '96

Pam Black (Knapp) '84

Cassey Cass '93

Sam Cook '93

Katie Davis '01

Brian Erstguard '93

Greg Frietag '95

Eric Hansen '88

Doug Herland '72

Amber Iverson '09

Sarah Jones '93

Bjorn Larsen '03

Tone Lawver '95

Elise Lindborg '84

Natilie McCarthy '09

Sean Magoun '94

Aiko Montgomery (Soyto) '94

Doug Nelson '90

Kim Olson (Mortor) '88

Knute Olson '90

Matt Price '01

Katie Schlepp '06

Andrea Schroeder '07

Carol Tobian '95

Rodney VanAndel '95



# THE PLU CREW LEGEND KEEPS GROWING

## POST-COLLEGIATE ROWERS CONTINUE TO REAP REWARDS

**M**any rowers have achieved success after graduation. Three former rowers have been inducted into the PLU Athletic Hall of Fame: Doug Herland '72, who became PLU's only Olympic medalist when he won a bronze as a coxswain in the 1984 Los Angeles Games; Pam Knapp Black '84, who became the first PLU rower to win a gold medal at nationals and went on to compete for the U.S. National team; and Dave Peterson '74, a rower from 1971-74 and coach from 1975-85. In addition, Bjorn Larsen '03 won three gold medals at the U.S. Nationals. In 2004 as a member of the Pennsylvania Athletic Club in Philadelphia. He is making his second appearance on the U.S. national team. In 2005 he was in the mlwt2x, 2006 mlwt4x. Sarah Jones '93 competed at her fifth national team competition and made her second Olympic appearance in 2004. — *Dave Girrard*



# PLU'S ROWING TRADITION

The program itself is entering its 42nd consecutive year of operation. The program has been experiencing a tremendous amount of growth over the last few years, and we are in a unique position this next season as we once again send our top varsity crews to NCAA championships for the women, and a national championship for the men. However, we are looking to continue this effort by asking for your assistance. We are currently searching for next year's recruiting class.

Some of the advantages of joining the rowing program here:

1. A large, well-protected lake where we train. We practice on American Lake, which is in close proximity to the campus.

2. The Campus is equipped with athletic facilities, a varsity training complex, and a fully staffed training room.

3. A program with a rich history and growing tradition of collegiate, elite and Olympic-caliber athletes.

PLU Crew provides the opportunity, equipment and instruction to walk-on, recruited, and varsity athletes to learn how to row and race, developing skills for:

- Rowing technique
- Effective training and good health habits
- Goal setting
- Self-evaluation
- Performing under pressure
- Balancing academic and athletic demands.

The strength of the team depends on its competitiveness, and the objective of the PLU Crew program is to field crews that are contenders for National Championship titles.



We seek to help our athletes recognize that the skills developed while racing for PLU yield confidence and strength of character and can be used to achieve success on campus and in life after graduation. PLU crew is a national leader, both in the scope of the opportunities offered to athletes and in the program's success on the water. Appealing to the nation's achieving student-athletes, members of our team are distinguished by their competitive record on the water; as well as their work, research, and leadership in PLU's academic environment. With supported openweight, lightweight, and novice squads, PLU offers competitive opportunities for every athlete. Whether you are an experienced/ recruited athlete — or are completely new to the sport — PLU crew welcomes you to join our rowing family!



# ACADEMIC RECORD

## **ROWING TEAM MAJORS INCLUDE**

Biology  
Business: Finance  
Business: Marketing  
China Studies  
Education  
Exercise science  
Geology  
History  
International Economics  
Math  
Musical Arts  
Nursing  
Political Science  
Pre-Med  
Psychology  
Religion  
Sociology  
Spanish  
German  
Norwegian

## **GRADUATION RATE**

*in 4 years:*  
84 percent  
*in 5 years:*  
92 percent

## **PERCENT WHO CONTINUE WITH POST-GRAD STUDIES**

2-5 percent



# THE ROWING SEASON

Our team trains throughout the academic year, with two competitive seasons: fall head-racing and spring sprint-racing.

The highlight of the fall is the Head of the Silcox, which attracts competitors from around the Pacific Northwest. Many alumni, family and friends come to this regatta due to the nice weather and a chance to view quality racing on the Division III level. Other fall regattas we compete in include the Charlie Brown Invitation, and Head of the Lake.

The winter training season kicks off with the annual PLU Triathlon. Winter training includes daily ergs, alternative team workouts, and strength conditioning in order to develop the explosive power needed for spring sprint racing.

While the Northwest is entrenched in rain and short days, the highlight of the winter is the annual pilgrimage to the picturesque mountain ranges of Mt. Rainer National Park, located just 2 hours from campus and clearly visible during our morning and afternoon practices.

The heart of spring is a series of weekend dual and tri-regattas against NCAA Division II and Division III competitor schools from within our 7-member NCRC Conference.

PLU's racing season traditionally starts on the first weekend of our March Spring Break Training Camp on American Lake, and continues through post-season championship rowing in early June.

For the last two seasons, selected athletes on both squads have competed in the Northeast against other Division III schools that they normally would not race against until nationals. When sched-



ules permit, the lightweights have competed at the San Diego Crew Classic.

Regular season racing for all squads concludes in May at the WIRA Sprints Championships, held annually in on the Lake Natoma Reservoir in Sacramento, Calif.

Depending on their regular season record, the lightweight women travel for post-season National Championships at the IRA Regatta. All men's teams attend the IRA Championships. Openweight women compete at the NCAA Championships.



# MEET THE TEAM

MEN AND WOMEN, TALL AND SHORT,  
MATH MAJORS AND MUSIC MAJORS, PLU CREW  
BRINGS TOGETHER MANY PERSONALITIES ...



**Stephanie Agoncillo**  
Junior  
Kent



**Katie Allen**  
Sophomore  
San Jose, California



**Caron Anderson**  
Junior  
Bainbridge Island



**Heather Crane**  
Sophomore  
Tacoma



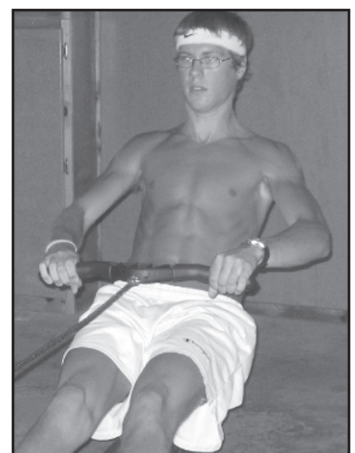
**Stephanie Farrow**  
Sophomore  
Tacoma



**Emilie Firn**  
Freshman  
Tacoma



**Jenna Hannity**  
Senior  
Tacoma



**Justin Hull**  
Junior  
Fargo, North Dakota



**Amber Iverson**  
Sophomore  
Bellingham



**Kat Jenkins**  
Sophomore  
Rochester, Minnesota



**Elizabeth Johnson**  
Junior  
Covington



**Kristina Johnson**  
Junior  
Fremont, Nebraska



**Audrey Knutson**  
Senior  
Okanogan



**Tyler Kohen**  
Junior  
Shelton



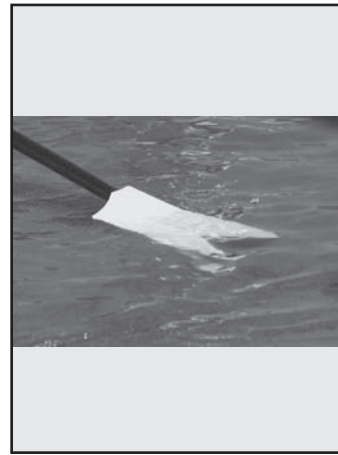
**Tabitha Lisle**  
Sophomore  
Salem, Oregon



**Natalie McCarthy**  
Sophomore  
Lakewood



**Brian Pedey**  
Sophomore  
Colbert



**Sam Prevot**  
Junior  
Tacoma



**Jenny Prince**  
Senior  
Auburn



**Sheri Sasaki**  
Junior  
Mililani, Hawaii



**Andrea Schroeder**  
Senior  
Westwood, Massachusetts



**Sarah Shanebeck**  
Sophomore  
Everett



**Lindsay Taylor**  
Senior  
Montesano



**Savannah Warren**  
Junior  
Forest Hills



**Cale Zimmerman**  
Sophomore  
Tacoma

# MEET THE COACHES



## **Coree Naslund**

Coree Naslund graduated from Western Washington University in June 2006 with bachelor's degree in journalism. She was a coxswain on WWU's women's rowing team and coxed the varsity four which took first at the 2006 NCAA Women's Rowing Championship regatta in New Jersey. WWU won the national team title for DII universities in 2005 and 2006. In high school, Coree rowed and coxed for Commencement Bay Rowing Club at American Lake. She looks forward to beginning her coaching career at the same lake where her passion for crew started.



## **Beth Henderson**

Beth is the primary contact for the men's program at Pacific Lutheran University. Beth competed as a rower during high school and later during college at Loyola Marymount University. During her senior year she served as captain of the women's team. Beth is a science teacher in the Bethel School District.



## **Amy Hildebrandt**

Amy is returning to her alma mater to assist with the men's novice program. While an athlete at PLU, she was a four-year varsity letterman. During her freshman year, she competed her way into a spot in the second varsity eight and was part of the team to go to the first NCAA Division III Championships in 2002. In 2003, Amy helped race the women's varsity eight to victory at the NCRC Championships by just a hair over rivals University of Puget Sound and Western Washington. In 2004 she was voted as co-captain for the women's varsity squad. She was also named part of the All Northwest Conference Team and voted Most Inspirational by her teammates in 2005. Amy returned to PLU to volunteer with the varsity and novice women's squads for the 2006 spring season.



## **Sarah Salisbury**

Sarah, originally from Missoula, Montana, graduated from Pacific Lutheran University in May of 2006. She has rowed in several countries and competed on both the regional and conference level for the Pacific Region. In 2006, she was apart of the third-place crew in the Division II/Division III women's varsity eight at the WIRA regatta. She also had the opportunity to participate with a rowing program in Germany during her junior year, where she competed with teams from a variety of countries. Sarah will be the primary coach for the novice women's program.



## **Tone Lawver** *Head Coach*

Tone graduated from PLU in 1995 and is entering his fifth year of coaching at PLU, ninth season overall. At PLU, the varsity women have been ranked in the top three NCAA Division III schools in the Pacific Region four out of the last five years. He has coached in Rochester, New York, and Boston, Massachusetts. While in Rochester, his junior women won gold at the NY-State Scholastic Championships, Empire State Games and a finals appearance at the Royal Canadian Henley from 1999-2002. In 1998, his junior men took silver in the four-plus at New England's School of Boys.

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# THE EARLY YEARS

## HERLAND'S BONES WOULD BREAK, BUT NOT HIS SPIRIT

by Jon Paul Morosi  
The Oregonian, Aug. 2, 2004

**H**e was born with broken bones. He lived with broken bones. And he died young, in 1991, after 39 years of fractures had fissured his marrow frail.

Douglas Herland spent his days in the throes of osteogenesis imperfecta, commonly known as brittle bone disorder. The disease bowed his legs, curved his back and halted his growth at 4-foot-9, 105 pounds.

His bones "would break and harden and soften and break again," close friend Dave Peterson said. "Nothing was easy for him. He was in constant pain."

Yet Herland refused to complain about his lot in life. He instead struggled with courage, dignity, and, above all, optimism. Ultimately, he achieved one of the highest honors an athlete – or anyone – could wish for:

An Olympic medal.

"He always had something good to say," said Peterson, a crew teammate of Herland's at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma in the early 1970s. "He finished every conversation with, 'And the good news is ...' "

While growing up in Bend, Ore.,



**Doug (Center) with his 1972 Meyer Cup Men. The Meyer and Lamberth cup races are still a highlight of the spring season. (Photo by Ken Oglstrom )**

Herland's athletic hopes made for sad, unfulfilled news. He longed to play with the other boys, but could only serve as team manager.

The "good news" is that Herland found a sport in which his small stature, sharp intellect and insatiable enthusiasm were valued commodities. He was a coxswain, so undersized that he had to carry lead shot to make the minimum weight of 110 pounds, but at the 1984 Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles, he beckoned Kevin Still and Robert Espeseth to a bronze medal in the 2,000-meter coxed pairs competition.

With that, he became the only

Olympic medalist in PLU history.

"He was just beaming," said Peterson, who was standing at the finish line that day and 10 years later gave an acceptance speech on Herland's behalf at his posthumous induction to the PLU Athletic Hall of Fame. "It was great. We took all kinds of pictures. He had his cane, and he limped up the ramp to the podium."

"It was incredible. His life was full of pain and suffering, but he was always hoping for something better. He had nothing going for him, but he had everything because of his spirit."

The echoes of that spirit resonate still, even 13 years after his death.

"He did a lot of things in his life that people never thought he'd be able to do," said Herland's sister, Lyla Duncan, the only surviving member of his immediate family. "They all labeled him as handicapped, but he wasn't afraid to work hard."

"People would look at him differently than the other kids, but that didn't bother him. He just went on with his life. He became an Eagle Scout, and he went on the 50-mile hike, right with them. He walked a little slower than the others, but he did it."

Herland's bronze medal is an



immense symbol of his achievement. Duncan has it now, along with a picture of her brother at the Olympics that she keeps on her refrigerator.

"I see it every day," she said. "I think about him all the time."

Herland left a similarly lasting impression on the men he medaled with. When Espeseth was reached last week at his office in Chattanooga, Tenn., his voice brightened at the mention of Herland's name.

"That's my coxswain," he said, warmly. "What a great kid."

Herland hadn't met Espeseth or Still until the day before that year's coxed pairs trials on Lake Carnegie in Princeton, N.J., where they won the Olympic bid by open water, but not without a memorable miscue. Because Herland's legs weren't long enough to reach the footholds, he slipped out of his seat in the bow and into the bottom of the boat on the first stroke of the final. The only way he could get back into position was to grab the steering stick and wiggle back up.

That caused the boat to slow, shimmy, and move off-course.

"I was almost ready to stop, thinking we had no chance," Herland said. "All the expletives known to man were going through my head, but I didn't say anything."

But they rallied, with a surge at 700 meters and moved into the lead at 1,200 to become the last three people named

to the U.S. Olympic team that year, in any sport. At the Olympics, they stuffed a beach ball into the boat to prevent Herland from slipping again and took bronze, finishing two lengths behind Italians Carmine Abbagnale and Giuseppe Abbagnale, and a half-length behind Romanians Dimitrie Popescu and Vasile Tomoiaga.

Herland ensured that what he did with the medal would be as momentous as his rise to it. After the Olympics, U.S. medal winners were invited to meet President Reagan at a reception near Los Angeles. During their 10 seconds with the President, most shook his hand, shared a few words, and had their photo snapped. Not Herland. He had with him a proposal for "Freedom on the River," his project to encourage those with disabilities to become involved in rowing.

"He had it all typed up and ready, so when he got up to see the President, he pulled that thing out of his pocket, handed it to him, and said, 'Here, I'd like you to take a look at this,' " Still recalled. "The audacity of hope."

Still isn't sure if Reagan ever read the proposal, but this much is certain: Herland drafted another proposal for what became "Rowing in the Mainstream," an initiative to grow the sport among all types of people, and promoted both programs during a nationwide tour of U.S. medalists.

"While we were all out partying,

Doug was writing 20 or 25 proposals, handing them out to every bigwig he could meet," Espeseth said. "That's Doug Herland. He was passionate about his cause, and he took advantage of his opportunity to advance it."

Herland's spirit is relayed onto those who come after him, through small written scraps of Herland's whit "There is alot to life except rowing , but really not much".

Herland remained involved in rowing after the Olympics, working through his programs, coaching different club and college teams, and realizing his self-stated goal of becoming the "Johnny Appleseed of Rowing." He coached the PLU crew team from 1987 until his death, even though he couldn't walk in his last years.

"The guys would pick him up out of his wheelchair and put him in the coaching launch," Peterson said. "He couldn't walk, he could hardly see, and he had to wear hearing aids."

But even as his body weakened, Douglas Herland's love of rowing never wavered, even as the disease claimed his ability to walk and ultimately brought on the stroke that took his life. He handled it all, life and death, pain and triumph, with the grace of careful oars slipping below the surface, good news forever lapping the bad.

*This article reprinted with permission from The Oregonian.*

**“He was passionate about his cause,  
and he took advantage of his  
opportunity to advance it.”**

**– Robert Espeseth**



**Doug Herland, PLU 1972, with his dog in 1985. (Photographer unknown)**

# Lutes

## About PLU

Pacific Lutheran University was founded in 1890 by a group of mostly Norwegian Lutherans from the Puget Sound area. They were led by the Reverend Bjug Harstad, who became PLU's first president. In naming the university, these pioneers recognized the important role that a Lutheran educational institution on the Western frontier of America could play in the emerging future of the region. They wanted the institution to help immigrants adjust to their new land and find jobs, but they also wanted it to produce graduates who would serve church and community. Education—and educating for service—was a venerated part of the Scandinavian traditions from which these pioneers came.

Although founded as a university, the institution functioned primarily as an academy until 1918, when it closed for two years. It reopened as the two-year Pacific Lutheran College, after merging with Columbia College, previously located in Everett. Further consolidations occurred when Spokane College merged with PLC in 1929. Four-year baccalaureate degrees were first offered in education in 1939 and in the liberal arts in 1942. The institution was reorganized as a university in 1960, reclaiming its original name. It presently includes a College of Arts and Sciences; professional schools of the Arts, Business, Education, Nursing, and Physical Education; and both graduate and continuing education programs. PLU has been closely and productively affiliated with the Lutheran church throughout its history. It is now a university of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), owned by the more than 600 congregations of Region I of the ELCA.

Many influences and individuals have combined to shape PLU and its regional, national and increasingly international reputation for teaching, service, and scholarship. A dedicated faculty has been an extremely important factor. The school has enjoyed a strong musical tradition from the beginning, as well as noteworthy alumni achievements in public school teaching and administration, university teaching and scholarship, the pastoral ministry, the health sciences and healing arts, and business. At PLU the liberal arts and professional education are closely integrated and collaborative in their educational philosophies, activities, and aspirations.

<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>ENROLLMENT</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>
Pacific Lutheran University	3,643	NCAA III
<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT</b>	<b>NICKNAME</b>
Tacoma, Washington	Dr. Loren Anderson	Lutes
<b>FOUNDED</b>	<b>ATHLETIC DIRECTOR</b>	<b>COLORS</b>
1890	Laurie Turner	Black & Gold





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