



TITAN EXPERTS LOOK AT THE 2016 OLYMPICS

This summer, Cal State Fullerton published a series of stories online highlighting University faculty, staff and athletes connected with the Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. Excerpts from three of those stories appear in this issue of Titan Report. You can find links to the entire series at <http://bit.ly/29VYwmp> and join the conversation on social media using #CSUFOLympics.



PROFESSOR PREPS ATHLETES FOR MENTAL GAME

Cal State Fullerton associate professor of kinesiology Traci Statler is spending her summer training athletes for the mental rigor of the games.

For 15 years, Statler has served as a sports psychology consultant for the USA Track and Field team. She will travel alongside an estimated 120 athletes and 30 coaching and medical staff to Brazil.

Statler work with athletes to manage distraction, energy, composure, confidence, visualization and self-talk. These skills are critical for success at major events like the Olympics.

“One of the mental challenges that athletes run into is the pressure of competing on the world stage,” said Statler.

“Learning how to navigate the spectacle of the Olympics, deal with that external environment and the distractions, and keep yourself calm and focused are massive challenges for athletes,” she said.



HISTORIAN SHEDS LIGHT ON NEW REFUGEE TEAM

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced in June that the first-ever team of refugee athletes will compete at the 2016 Summer Olympics. This isn't

the first time a refugee team has tried to enter the Olympic games, said Toby Rider, Cal State Fullerton assistant professor of kinesiology.

Following World War II, a refugee team attempted to compete in the 1952 Olympics. Rider theorizes that the rejection of the 1952 refugee team was due to the IOC's strict interpretation of its system of national representation.

“The IOC rules are quite simply that you cannot compete at the Olympics as an individual; you must represent a country that has a recognized national Olympic committee,” he said. Allowing a group of refugee athletes to compete in the 2016 Olympics demonstrates a new flexibility in decision-making for the IOC, says Rider.

RESEARCHER EXAMINES CRACKDOWN ON DOPING

“Faster, Higher, Stronger” is the motto for the Olympic games.

But there is a dark side when athletes take this to the extreme, says John Gleaves, associate professor of kinesiology at Cal State Fullerton.

“Sport values athletes who push the limits, take risks, are willing to sacrifice and play through pain,” said Gleaves. “If you embrace these ideas too much, you can end up making some bad choices.”

Take Russia, for example, whose track and field athletes have been banned from competing at the 2016 Summer Olympics because of growing evidence of state-sponsored doping at three recent Olympic games.

“When you have a relatively closed state like Russia, and you have people with political power and finances who think it's more important to win medals than to have clean sport, it's incredibly difficult for the rest of the world to regulate that,” said Gleaves. “The big fear is that Russia's not a lone wolf, but, in fact, other countries are doing it and they haven't been caught.”

IT'S NO FLUKE: SCIENTISTS IDENTIFY SECOND GRAVITATIONAL WAVE EVENT

Cal State Fullerton scientists have helped to identify a second direct detection of gravitational waves from a pair of black holes that collided approximately 1.4 billion years ago.

These CSUF scientists were key contributors to the first detection of gravitational waves, announced Feb. 11 by the National Science Foundation and LIGO Scientific Collaboration, a group of more than 1,000 scientists from universities across the U.S. — including CSUF — and in 14 other countries.

This first groundbreaking discovery was a milestone in physics and astronomy, confirming a major prediction of Albert Einstein's 1915 general theory of relativity and marking the beginning of the new field of gravitational-wave astronomy. Gravitational waves carry information about their origins and about the nature of gravity that cannot otherwise be obtained.



TITANS GO TO WASHINGTON

Against the backdrop of a lively presidential election, Cal State Fullerton students are spending the summer interning at congressional offices, executive agencies, nonprofits and advocacy groups in the nation's capital.

More than 400 Cal State Fullerton students have participated in the DC Scholars Program since 2006, gaining insight into the world of American politics.



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Did You Know?



- Seven Titans were selected in June's Major League Baseball draft. Last year, six players were chosen. This is the 42nd straight season that the Titans, four-time national champions, have had at least one player selected in the MLB draft.
- After a standout June performance at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, dance majors Jonathan Kim, Andrew Corpuz, Kevin Lopez and Chris Jensen have been invited to perform at Jacob's Pillow in Becket, Massachusetts.

The College of the Arts dance program is one of only four out of more than 500 in the nation chosen to perform at the iconic American dance center and school, listed as a National Historic Landmark.