

BLOG

MAIA AUSTIN - NATIONAL STUDENT ATHLETE DAY

4.6.20

[Maia Austin](#) is a senior studying exercise science and is a member of the University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS) [cross country](#) and [track & field](#) collegiate teams. Outside of collegiate sports, Austin also participates in triathlons.

Although Austin first declared her major in math, Austin found her ambition to pursue [exercise science](#). She shared, "When I took anatomy and physiology as an elective my second semester, I realized that I enjoyed learning about the human body more than I enjoyed learning about calculus. I looked through the biology and health majors offered by UCCS and decided that exercise science would be the best fit for me."

Austin continued, "My plan after graduation is to pursue a Masters in Business Administration at UCCS and run cross country and track for another year, as well as finish up a few pre-requisite classes for medical school. My career plan is to become a family medicine physician and maybe start my own private practice." Austin has a long list of awards and accolades in her cross country and track & field career not only at UCCS but also in high school.

When asked about why she chose UCCS, Austin shared, "Participating in collegiate running wasn't even on my radar until the summer before my junior year of college! Additionally, I was fortunate enough to receive the Kane Family Foundation Scholarship, which is what really sealed the deal. I am so thankful for their assistance in helping me achieve my academic goals."

[The Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference \(RMAC\) announced the 2019-20 indoor track & field all-academic team](#) on Thursday, March 26 as the UCCS track & field teams totaled 34 Mountain Lions on the conference all-academic team, including Austin who was voted RMAC All-Academic Athlete of the Year. As a 2020 RMAC Summit Award winner in both women's cross country and indoor track & field, Austin became the first student-athlete in school history to win two RMAC Summit Awards in their career. Austin has also been RMAC Track Athlete of the Week (2020) and Second Team All American in the Distance Medley Relay (2019).

Austin attributes her success to her teammates, coaches and professors sharing, "UCCS has impacted me tremendously both academically and athletically. On the academic side, my professors have been extremely supportive in helping me pursue my academic and career goals. I have spent many hours in their offices asking questions and discussing possible career paths, and I am so thankful for the advice and insight that they have so willingly offered me. On the athletic side, my cross country and track teams continually fuel my success both on and off the track. My teammates and coaches have supported me every step of the way, and inspire me to be the best student, athlete, and person that I can be."



Helen and Arthur E. Johnson
Beth-El College of
Nursing and Health Sciences

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO COLORADO SPRINGS

BLOG

Austin wanted to share a message to student athletes affected by COVID-19, “It has been such an honor to be featured for National Student Athlete Day! However, I am sure that this day is bittersweet for many student-athletes due to the sudden changes caused by COVID-19. Athletes at every level have been affected by this, and my heart goes out to all of the UCCS student-athletes impacted by this unfortunate situation.

I want to reach out specifically to the senior student-athletes who have had their final few months of their collegiate athletic careers so abruptly taken away from them. You knew that your last game/competition was approaching, but it wasn't supposed to happen so suddenly. Even if some people may be of the perception that you should simply be able to move on with your life since it's “just sports,” you shouldn't ever feel guilty for mourning the loss of something that has been a huge part of your life. The truth is that most people have not had the privilege of being collegiate student-athletes, and as such they may not fully understand the deep camaraderie that develops within a team, the countless hours spent in the pursuit of excellence in your sport, or the immense role that athletics plays in your daily life.

So don't try to downplay the emotions that you're feeling, and please remember that it is fully possible to be sympathetic toward the greater world context of this situation while also allowing yourself to grieve the negative consequences in your own life. Despite not getting to finish out your collegiate career the way you had planned, nothing can take away the friendships formed, memories made, and lessons learned during your time as a student-athlete here at UCCS.”

Thank you for celebrating National Student Athlete Day with us, Maia!



Helen and Arthur E. Johnson
Beth-El College of
Nursing and Health Sciences

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **COLORADO SPRINGS**