

2024 Scholarship Recipient Bios

Chloe Bargfrede

Rain City was a great fit for Chloe because she's always done multiple sports and Rain City allowed team participation with flexibility for regular swim practices. Looking back, this flexibility, along with the fun practices, provided her with longevity in the sport and an appreciation for running.

Chloe ran for Rain City in 2015, 2016 and 2019 and highlights learning about the team aspect of cross country while with RCF. She did not qualify as an individual for JOs her first season with the team. But her team qualified so she got to go to Nationals. She ended up having her best race of the season there, which she credits to racing for the team rather than herself. This mindset of running for the team has remained true through her whole running career. In high school she ran a personal best at the district championship which helped qualify her Ballard XC team for State.

Rain City Flyers also helped Chloe gain a good work ethic. She learned that with daily practice and hard work success will come. It may not come immediately and there may be struggles along the way, as she had during her junior year high school track season. But with continued effort results can improve – by the end of that season Chloe had qualified for Metro championships, dropped a minute in the 2-mile, and dropped 20 seconds in the mile. The confidence to keep working through plateaus had its roots in RCF.

Chloe is not afraid of working hard to achieve academic goals. She participated Running Start her junior and senior years, while fulfilling her honors program demands and competing in track and cross country. This June Chloe will graduate as the 2024 Valedictorian with her GED from Ballard High School and from North Seattle College with an Associate's Degree of Computer Science. She plans on attending the University of Arizona, being part of their W.A. Franke Honors College, and majoring in electrical engineering. She will harness her skills in both running and swimming on the Arizona triathlon team.

Kate Fox

Kate started her childhood sports journey in the softball outfield. She loved the social time in the dugout but didn't use up enough energy standing in the field. She liked to run so joined Meadowbrook track and then Rain City as a sixth grader. She immediately loved the camaraderie, the energy, and Capture the Flag. She writes that she was always "comfortable as me" on Rain City. She loved working to keep up in Coach Ian's 400 repeats. There was always something to learn from teammates and older teammates became role models.

After running in the Regional meet for Rain City in 8th grade and after a COVID hiatus, Kate started running track and XC at Roosevelt High School. Rain City coaches had instilled a team-first attitude, including for track, and she modeled this as a yearly varsity letterman and senior year Captain in both sports. Similar to RCF, teammates would pace each other for races and work together in the long distance events, and would cheer each other on, whether running for first or second to last place. Kate learned to set goals through distance running. Her parents were runners and one of Kate's goals was to break her mom's 800m high school record, which she achieved this year with a 2:16 at District.

Kate credits Rain City with giving her the confidence in high school to achieve her goals, both in running and in life. She comments that the bonds made as teammates endure and that the community of Rain City and its alumni is so vast that no matter where she is she may see a familiar face or find a Rain City connection. She was surprised to learn one connection - turns out that both of Kate's parents ran with RCF in the late 80s and early 90s, so she's a second generation Rain City Flyer.

She will continue her journey on to Macalester College in Minnesota as a liberal arts major. She specifically chose a college where she could continue to compete and contribute as a distance runner and where she could find a sense of community as supportive and fun as the Rain City crew that started her down this path. She's not certain what she will study or where her career path will go, but she knows running will always be a part of her life. So she will join the Macalester XC and track teams and contribute to the community of runners. Go Scots!

Logan Plesko

Logan's start with Rain City while in elementary school was his mom's idea. He remembers being nervous as none of his friends were on the team, but after a few weeks of running and sharing workouts he grew to love coming to practice and teammates became friends. His team was so dominant that they won almost every meet he can remember. That pushed him to become dedicated and to improve along with the team. Distance running was hard but you had to keep going if your goal was a PR. Workouts that seemed like a waste of time led to results in real time meets and self-improvement. And the struggle wasn't so bad when you shared it with the team. In 2017 his efforts paid off as he helped his team to a third place finish at the JO National cross country meet.

An injury ended Logan's RCF career early, but he took what he learned through the team with him. When Logan joined the track team at Ballard he approached it in the Rain City Way, continuous 200s, ladders 2x5 200m repeats with two minutes of rest. He endured because he knew he would see results on meet day. This approach to big tasks, learned through Rain City, has served Logan well. Whenever he is faced with something big, he breaks it down into smaller parts like workouts, eventually becoming good enough to finish the whole task and reach the goal-like a new PR.

Logan is now a student who gets things done the day before they are due and his 3.9 gpa reflects the benefit. He will graduate with about 160 volunteer hours, many spent in the café of the Ballard Food Bank, where he served people in need and helped them stay healthy. He also helped kids develop and grow their skills and passion for Ultimate Frisbee as a coach in training. Logan led his BHS track team as captain for his senior season, advancing to the District meet in the 400 and the State Meet in the 4X400 relay – a great ending to his high school running career.

From a shy kid who barely talked to his teammates to a passionate track captain with a love of running, Rain City taught Logan how to connect with others and his sport, breaking down big obstacles into small parts and building up to the big task. This philosophy is something he will use throughout life, especially as he heads to the University of Washington this fall to study engineering. We expect his mindset will continue to serve him well throughout life.

Etienne Redpath

Rain City was Etienne's first experience with sports in elementary school. He honestly states that playing Capture the Flag at the end of practice was his favorite part of the experience, but also remembers traveling to meets and passing people in the chute. He ran with RCF from 2013 until 2017, when he was introduced to Ultimate Frisbee. Though his cross country days were over, he was always faster in Ultimate because of them.

Etienne continued to play Ultimate Frisbee throughout high school at Ballard and served as team captain his senior year. He also coached middle school Ultimate, helping younger classes learn to love this unique sport. High school also marked Etienne's grand return to distance running when he joined the Ballard track team. During his senior year Etienne added sprints on the track and joined Boys Swim and Dive, qualifying and swimming at Metros. While active athletically, Etienne also performed with the Ballard High School Band and was Head Drum Major as a senior. All this while completing AP classwork within the BHS Biotech Academy.

During his years with Rain City Etienne made friends and learned: if someone worked hard enough, sports could carry them through levels of life and open doors previously closed. He shares a story that to him encompasses the commitment and caring of the RCF coaches. Years after running with Rain City he was at Woodland to see a family friend run. Coach Jim recognized him, which was a surprise as he hadn't been a team stand out performer. They had a conversation about Ultimate and that his XC days were over – a small, simple, yet meaningful conversation that showed the RCF connection endures.

Etienne is attending Washington State University in the fall and will study Mechanical Engineering and Material Sciences. College sports are still a possibility, but he definitely plans on joining the marching band. Whatever his activities involve, he will carry along with him the support and confidence Rain City gave him, and will proudly brag, "I ran with Rain City."

Will Sandnes

Will remembers his time running with Rain City Flyers as one of the most joyful parts of his childhood. He started track and field at Meadowbrook as a kindergartener and instantly loved it, particularly running fast and competing to win. When he joined RCF a few years later he noticed the competition was a big step up from his community center experiences. Getting beat more often only made him want to get better and faster. He loved coming to RCF practice, being with the team and his friends and coaches. And he loved the feeling of lowering his time and getting a PR.

When he was a 9-10 boy, Will placed 4th at JO Regionals and his parents agreed to take him to Nationals. He remembers scouting the competition with his dad and setting a goal to be an All-American, top-25 finisher. He finished 24th and to this day the white and blue hat that said "All American" remains his favorite. It inspired him to want that level of achievement every year. He got a second hat as an 11-12

competitor but was injured in the process. He missed a full track season and trying to comeback was discouraging. But throughout the time his coaches and teammates provided support and encouragement.

What followed was Will's most memorable year. Surrounded by teammates who knew how to have fun while putting in the work and training hard, he bounced back and got stronger. His 13-14 boys team had sights set on winning JO Nationals. The race was in Wisconsin but the freezing temps didn't chill the team's determination. They finished 1st and Will remembers his 8th place finish as the best race he ever ran.

Within Ran City Will learned to push himself, to persevere, and to work hard. He carried this passion through high school at Bishop Blanchet, where he was on the State winning XC team in 2021 and podiumed in the 800 meters in 2022. He will take memories and passion for running along to college at the University of Montana, where he will run track and cross country.

Dexter Stevens

Dexter remembers Rain City as a welcoming community helping young kids exercise and have fun. He had done middle school track, but wanted to try cross country so headed to Woodland Park as an 8th grader. He recalls proudly telling his parents how far he ran during practice. And he made friends through RCF who he still sees at high school meets. He only ran with the team one year, but Rain City opened up the world of running to him and hooked him on the idea of distance running – and it shaped his life and social connections for the next four years.

At Ballard High School Dexter ran both track and cross country for four years. He had the opportunity to run WIAA State and compete in Metro and District championships. Most recently he ran the 2k Steeplechase at the Nike Outdoor Nationals to a personal best. While athletics remain an important part of his life, during his four years at Ballard he also excelled in academics. Dexter was named the Student Athlete of the Year (Boys Team), awarded for excelling both in athletics and in academics, and he was honored with the 2024 Metro-League Scholar-Athlete Award.

So why has this pastime of running become something in which Dexter's been so invested? Distance runners are often supportive competitors as there is a shared respect and understanding because running is such a mental challenge. Achievement comes from hard work and dedication, not luck or a bad referee. Dexter jokingly thinks that distance runners who voluntarily participate in a sport where you put yourself through pain just to see some arbitrary number on a sheet determine your value must have a screw loose ... but sees that as part of the fun. Distance runners work hard, both on and off the course.

Dexter will attend the University of Washington to pursue a degree in Applied Mathematics. He will take the same philosophy he applies to running – work hard to gain. And he will still be running around the city for the next four years with the Husky Running Club!