

## Rene Elias: Concordia's Photographer!

BY ANNA FRITZE

**I**F YOU HAVE SEEN any awesome Concordia sports pictures posted anywhere recently, it's likely that Rene Elias took them. Rene has liked photography since he was a kid. He says, "Growing up, I just always liked taking photos. I remember going to a wedding with a camera my parents had just gotten me when I was eight years old. I ended up following the couple around and taking their pictures throughout the night." Since then, Rene's passion for photography has progressed, but he didn't consider making photography his career choice at first.

Rene went to St. Paul College for two years before coming to Concordia. There, he studied pre-law at first. He took photography courses, but they were not his main focus. When a photography professor took Rene under his wing, Rene started to change his mind about his future; his professor encouraged students to take pictures of what they wanted to. "I started taking pictures of things I liked, like sneakers and sports, in the classic black and white," Rene said about his class. He also commented on learning the inner workings of a camera: "My professor made us take a camera apart and put it back together again. That helped me understand why we take pictures a certain way and what goes on inside the camera."

Here at Concordia, Rene is planning on graduating December 2021 with a major in marketing and a photography minor. He started an internship last spring with the athletics department, though it was not for photography at first. He started out running the scoreboards, taking stats, and running social media accounts, but after mentioning that he could take photos as well, his superior Josh Deer gave him a chance. Since then, his internship has turned into a double-internship in a way, as he helps with athletics and takes photos. Josh says about Rene, "Rene's work speaks for itself. He has a great eye for photography and the instincts to anticipate a great shot in the spur of the moment. What people don't see is how Rene has dedicated himself to his craft behind the scenes with the ability to organize, sort and edit his work. Perhaps just as important of a skill is his ability to cultivate positive, trusting relationships with players and coaches, allowing him to embed himself which leads to the type of access the best photographers in the business dream on!"

On taking sports photos at Concordia, Rene said, "My job is to make the students look good." He lives with two basketball players and one football player, which he says helps him know what the athletes want their photos to look like. He never wants any of the athletes to feel overlooked; he tries to take photos that make the athletes happy, and in turn, Rene is happy, too. Basketball is his favorite sport to photograph because, "there's always action happening." The main thing he loves about the photography courses on-campus is that he and his classmates critique past classes' photos, but they also constructively criticize each other as well.

Rene's plans for the future are to work his way up to taking photos for professional sports teams. He knows there will be bumps in the road and that he will have to work hard, especially with COVID happening now. His dream team to work for is the Dallas Cowboys, and help them "keep their value as a franchise." Overall, when asked what he loves about photography, Rene said, "I like the freedom of taking pictures however I want. There's not one set way to do it. I also love editing; there are so many programs to learn from, and once you think you know what you're doing, there's an entire new program to learn."

At the end of our talk, Rene said, "The main point I want to get across is that I really like my job, but my main goal is to make the athletes and the school look good. I want to make sure Concordia is represented well. I do my job because I love sports, and I want to make the students happy."

You can find Rene's pictures on Instagram @hypebeast\_nene, and on Concordia's Flickr page. Check him out!



Left to Right: Jacob Shields, Kenny Holz, Rene Elias, Carlos Barela

Photo Credit: Rene Elias

## CSP Recruits New Athletes on Signing Day

BY ISABELLA D'BURKE

**E**VEN THOUGH COVID is still present, CSP is recruiting new athletes weekly, with many of those athletes signing on National Signing Day (November 11th). Following November 11th, CSP announced that it will be gaining three athletes on the women's basketball team, five athletes on the softball team, six athletes on the baseball team, six athletes on the soccer team, and five athletes on the cross country/track and field teams.

When discussing the new recruits in the article, "Soccer releases fall signing class," by Joey Scanlan, head soccer coach Steve Bellis said, "Our focus for this class was very specific. To stay competitive, we knew we needed to strengthen defensively and add some wide players to the mix. I think we have accomplished this goal and much more. Each player will bring many positives both on and off the field to our program." With that goal in mind, Bellis and the team will be welcoming six new women: Brittany Bordson from Lino Lakes, Minnesota, Kendyl Hagenbeck from Mukwonago, Wisconsin, Lily Vang from Maplewood, Minnesota, Sydney Manthana from Rockford, Minnesota, McKayla Stockness from Mahtomedi, Minnesota, and Scarlett Rock from River Falls, Wisconsin.

The women's basketball team will also be gaining valuable players. The team will be gaining three new women: Megan Gamble from Clear Lake, Minnesota, Caela Tighe from Big Lake, Minnesota, and Faith Alberts from Parkers Prairie, Minnesota.

In a recent article from CSP, head softball coach Bob Bartel expresses his excitement for the five new athletes. These athletes include Avery Johnson from Hudson, Wisconsin, Morgan Medlo from Moundsview, Minnesota, Sydney Pelzer from Little Canada, Minnesota, Danielle Sharum from Marietta, Georgia, and Rachel Novak from Oakdale, Minnesota. Baseball will be gaining six new athletes, Kal Brohmer from Elko, Minnesota, Korey Dahlberg from Farmington, Minnesota, Jack Greenlun from Sartell, Minnesota, Reece Piontek from Denmark, Wisconsin, Gavin Rusch from Green Bay, Wisconsin, and David Salz from Maple Grove, Minnesota.

The women's cross country/track and field teams had five signees on the 11th. Running on both the cross country and track teams will be Tess Houghlum from Mora, Minnesota and Kelsey Thelen from Farmington, Minnesota. Sprinting for the track team will be Jordyn Glinski from Lakeville, Minnesota and Gianna Bedford from Eagan, Minnesota. The final woman who signed on the 11th is pole vaulter Abby York from North St. Paul. This is just a sneak preview of all the new athletes CSP will be gaining in 2021. Not only will there be more signees throughout the year, this article doesn't include the men's cross country/track and field, football, golf, swimming, men's basketball, and esports athletes. CSP will recruit numerous student athletes as the year progresses.