

## Drake Group Honors Brad Wolverton, Former Reporter for The Chronicle of Higher Education is the First Recipient of the Drake Hero Award

Brad Wolverton, a former sports reporter for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, was selected to receive the inaugural Drake Hero Award. The award was presented at The Drake Group Awards Luncheon on April 13, 2017 at the Columbia Metropolitan Conference Center in Columbia, South Carolina. The Drake Hero Award was established in 2015 to honor an individual who has demonstrated extraordinary effort and produced a recognizable impact in advancing collegiate sports reform. Wolverton, through his tireless commitment to quality journalism and telling the stories about which many others were unwilling to write, helped expose the current state of intercollegiate athletics in America today as an educational enterprise in need of significant reform.

**2017 Drake Hero Award  
Recipient - Brad Wolverton**



**Former Drake President  
Allen Sack (left) and  
Current Drake President  
David Ridpath (right)  
present Drake Hero Award  
to Wolverton**



**Wolverton presents his  
acceptance remarks on the  
occasion of receiving the  
first Drake Hero Award**



Wolverton, now a reporter at Nerd Wallet, was a senior writer for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. His coverage of college athletics started in 2005 with his writing and reporting primarily focused on the confluence of money and sports on campus. His research has highlighted allegations of academic misconduct, reports of coaches' meddling in medical decisions, and concerns about the rapid rise in athletics donations cutting into academic giving at many institutions.

Some of his most memorable stories include *Confessions of a Fixer: How one former coach perpetuated a cheating scheme that benefited hundreds of college athletes*, a sobering tale of a former coach who used fraudulent academic courses to gain initial athletic eligibility for dozens of prospective athletes. Another article profiled Dasmine Cathey, a semi-literate football player at the University of Memphis, for which he won a 2012 Online Journalism Award. His examination of the Christian influences in Clemson University's football program was recognized as a "notable" selection in the 2014 volume of "The Best American Sports Writing." In 2007, he and a colleague wrote a five-part series on athletics booster clubs, which won the Dick Schaap Excellence in Sports Journalism award from Sport in Society.

Before joining *The Chronicle*, Wolverton wrote about sports business for *BusinessWeek*. He has published articles in *Men's Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and on *SI.com*. He is a graduate of Indiana University at Bloomington, where he majored in journalism.

Drake Group President B. David Ridpath noted, "Brad's willingness and dogged determination to get at the truth and pull back the curtain on the intercollegiate and higher education sports enterprise has been a real credit to sports journalism and he is sorely missed, but we wish him nothing but the best in his new endeavor at Nerd Wallet. His articles in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* were of such breadth and depth that he is frequently cited in elite academic journal articles. As important, his work also encouraged ongoing efforts by reform groups, such as The Drake Group, to continue to question and push for academic integrity in college sports."