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We're so grateful for all the feedback on our newsletter! If you have anything you'd like to share, we'd love to hear from you.

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FROM COLLEGE SPORTS TO SUPERSTARDOM

4 CELEBRITIES WHO WERE STUDENT-ATHLETES

April 6 is National Student-Athlete Day! Many students play sports in addition to their studies in high school and college, and many famous people also spent much of their youth playing sports while going to school. Here are four stars who were also college athletes.

Singer Garth Brooks

From a young age, Brooks loved sports and hoped that his athletic abilities would make him famous. He earned a track scholarship to Oklahoma State University as a javelin thrower and spent most of the 1980s perfecting his technique. In 1999, he played left field for the San Diego Padres, and he continued to play baseball in the early 2000's, signing with the New York Mets and Kansas Royals. Today, the famous country singer provides children with health and education assistance as well as recreational and sporting opportunities through his foundation, Teammates for Kids.

Actress Emma Watson

When Watson enrolled at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, she joined the field hockey team. She loved the sport as a child, and as an adult, her passion for field hockey continues to motivate her. She occasionally travels to elementary schools for a few friendly games in hopes of encouraging young players. Watson has also worked with Hockey Futures, an organization that promotes the sport to British youth.



Actor Steve Carell

Much like his character Michael Scott in "The Office" once said, Carell too has "been pretty much skating my whole life." Carell is a fantastic ice skater and has played hockey since he was a child. He was a goalie for Denison University, a Division III school in Granville, Ohio. Today, Carell still plays in a Los Angeles recreational league whenever he has the opportunity.

TV Broadcaster Robin Roberts

Roberts began her career in broadcasting as a sports director at Southeastern Louisiana University's radio station. She also played on the school's basketball team, the Lady Lions, between 1979 and 1983. During her career on the court, Roberts scored 1,446 points and had 1,034 rebounds, which earned her a place in the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame and on the NCAA's list of most influential student-athletes.

HAVE A ZOOM COURT APPEARANCE? AVOID THESE MISTAKES

IN FLORIDA, TRIALS ARE STARTING. ARE YOU READY?

For almost a year now, Florida has postponed or put on hold most of its civil trials and many criminal ones. Now, that's due to change: Lee County started their trials again a few months ago, and Miami joined them on March 1. If you have a case pending, this is great news: It gives me and my firm a lot more leverage over insurance companies, because they know we really can take them to court! But will you be ready for your own court appearance, which will likely happen over Zoom? There are some things to remember and some things to avoid doing, and they're not always common sense. This month, I'm going to talk about a few of them.

First, court is court, even if you're sitting in your living room — so dress the part! Put on a shirt and tie, or a nice dress or blouse. Because it's a Zoom trial, you may feel the urge to not wear pants. Resist that urge, and remember that "dressing for court" these days is about your background as well as your clothes. There are filters that make it look like you're on a beach somewhere, but keep in mind that those filters can fail randomly, and they don't always look professional. You're better off finding a modest room or a quiet place with a clean stretch of wall behind you.

Speaking of quiet, keep your mic on "mute" unless you're talking, and don't talk unless the judge asks you a question or your attorney tells you it's alright. Anything caught on a "hot mic" is not privileged or private information.

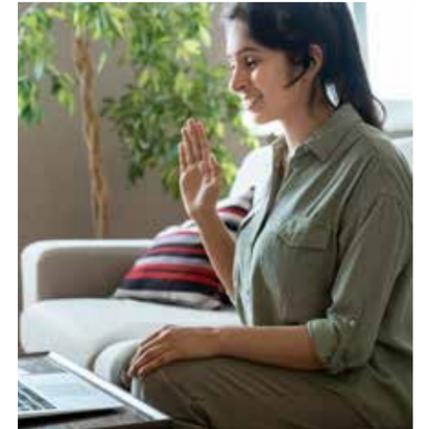
Similarly, if for some reason you find yourself in a Zoom lobby without your attorney (perhaps they haven't logged in yet, for

example), do not say anything to anyone except "Hello, my name is _____" and "I'm waiting for my attorney, who will speak on my behalf." That's your attorney's job. Don't be rude, but do *not* volunteer anything more than that. Even an innocuous question from opposing counsel like "How are you feeling today?" can be a slippery slope if you're supposed to be hurt or in pain due to injury. Don't know who the opposing counsel is? All the more reason to stay quiet until we get there.

It's really difficult for your lawyers to rehabilitate testimony once you've said something you shouldn't have, and that statement can happen in no time at all. So, one more time: "I'm waiting for my attorney, who will speak on my behalf."

And before you can say anything, be sure to test your equipment well before your time slot. You want to make sure your mic and webcam work, and that you've got a place to sit without interruptions. The Whisler Law Firm was set up to meet and work remotely long before the pandemic hit, because we wanted to be able to work from anywhere in the world, if necessary. Among other things, it's a great way to be prepared for Florida's occasional hurricanes! Even so, we test our gear weekly, and we fix or replace anything that isn't working.

We even have a paralegal who's registered to be a Remote Online Notary, which means we can notarize virtually. She had to take a course, pass an exam, get covered by a surety bond and by insurance, and she has to use special technology to do the actual



notarizations. Most law firms can't say the same thing — and that's my last piece of advice for remote court appointments: Don't hire a law firm for your personal injury case if those attorneys aren't tech savvy and capable. Remember the video of the Texas lawyer whose filter turned him into a cat? I haven't laughed that hard in years — but it's a good lesson, too. That is not the attorney you want advocating for you in a Zoom trial!

It may be tempting to say, "Well, this Zoom stuff is only for the pandemic. It'll all be over soon." But I think the opposite is true: Now that we see how easy, convenient, and efficient it can be to do things over Zoom, I doubt we'll ever go back to in-person-only trials. In the future, "Zoom courtroom etiquette" might just be called "courtroom etiquette." And if you're taking your case seriously, you need to take this stuff seriously, too.

—Josh Whisler

BOOST YOUR HOME'S ENERGY EFFICIENCY WITH THESE 3 PRODUCTS

With the development of accessible, affordable technologies and home products, improving the energy efficiency of your home is easier than ever. On top of that, many of these products give you more options for home automation so you can save money and stay comfortable without even thinking about it. Here are three investments that will boost your energy efficiency right now.

A Smart Thermostat

The great thing about smart thermostats is that they offer more programmable options than traditional thermostats. For example, you can buy a thermostat that connects to your home's Wi-Fi and is controlled by an accompanying smartphone app, no matter where you are. Another awesome feature is that smart thermostats will turn on and off based on your schedule and temperature preferences. In the long run, this feature can save you money and energy.



Next-Generation Insulation

While you might be familiar with fiberglass insulation, an industry standard, there are much better options that help you maintain

the temperature in your home. For existing homes, spray foam insulation is the best option, as it is the easiest to install and can still save energy. It's also ideal for insulating attics, basements, and hard-to-reach spots. For new homes or more involved renovations, insulating concrete forms are the most energy-efficient option.

A Smart Water Heater

Generally, water heaters are not the most energy efficient — especially if you're in a household where hot water is in constant demand. But with a smart water heater, you can change that. Much like the previously mentioned thermostat, you can control a smart water heater remotely or set it to heat water according to a specific schedule. This way, the heating elements aren't running all day, every day. They come in tank and tankless varieties, though tankless is the way to go to maximize energy efficiency without taking up much space.

ARE YOU READY FOR HURRICANE SEASON?

3 THINGS TO DOUBLE-CHECK THIS SPRING



You might not want to think about hurricane season yet, but unfortunately, storms are coming earlier each year. Over the last decade, the U.S. has experienced 10 named tropical storms before the official start of hurricane season on June 1. It's so bad that, this spring, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) debated pushing hurricane season up two weeks! Ultimately, they left the date alone, but Tropical Weather Outlooks will start coming out on May 15. With that in mind, it's best to be ready for anything!

As we mentioned on Pg. 1, our team has always taken hurricane preparedness seriously. We gave our employees the ability to work from home early on just in case of a storm, and that helped us cope with COVID-19 lockdowns. But how prepared are you for hurricanes this year? To keep your property and family safe, double-check these three things before May 15.

- 1. Your Family Hurricane Plan.** What will your family do if a hurricane approaches your home? How will you cover your windows, secure your roof, and ensure you have water and cool air? Do you have a plan in place in case of a power outage or evacuation? Talk these things through with your family.
- 2. Your Hurricane Emergency Kit.** You should have basic supplies on hand in case of a tropical storm, including three days of nonperishable food and water, a first aid kit, a battery-operated radio, a manual can opener, and a waterproof container for cash and vital documents. For a full list of recommended items, visit [StateOfFlorida.com/Articles/Hurricane-Preparedness-Guide/](https://www.stateof.fl.gov/articles/hurricane-preparedness-guide/).
- 3. Your Property Insurance Coverage.** Hurricanes and other tropical storms can cause massive damage to your property and even destroy your home. Before hurricane season hits, make sure your property insurance covers wind damage. If it doesn't, consider purchasing separate hurricane insurance.

Your hurricane plan and emergency kit will protect your family's lives, and your property insurance should save you thousands of dollars in repair costs. But, unfortunately, sometimes insurance companies drag their feet or refuse to pay what they owe. If that happens to you or someone you love this hurricane season, call our team at 1-833-529-5677. Our experienced property insurance attorneys will make sure you get a fair settlement offer.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO FILE LAW PROTECTS YOU FROM WORKERS' COMPENSATION RETALIATION



If you're like most, you may be scared to file a workers' compensation claim. Perhaps you think you'll be fired or your hours cut. Your employer may even have told you, "We'll take care of it ourselves," to keep you from filing. But you should never be afraid to do the right thing under the law — and the law protects you if you have to file.

The State of Florida requires employers to provide workers' compensation insurance for their employees. The Bureau of Compliance has set forth coverage requirements making workers' compensation insurance a necessity when specific types of employers meet certain employee number thresholds, and for a good reason: People can get hurt at work! So, if you are legally classified as an "employee" (as opposed to something like an "independent contractor"), you should be covered in the event of a workplace injury.

If you are technically a contractor, or something else is going on, you may instead have to file a personal injury claim, which is another area our firm is deeply familiar with.

Unlike injury law, workers' compensation provides no-fault benefits, which means the system pays out claims regardless of who is found to be at

fault for the accident. That may encourage you to file when you might otherwise not.

You might be thinking, "Great — but what if my employer fires me or retaliates anyway?" Well, there's really only one situation where that might be allowed, and that's if your injury has impacted your ability to do your job in the long run. It's actually pretty hard for an employer to prove, though, so most times retaliation will be illegal, and you'll need the services of a good personal injury attorney to help you cut through the veils they may draw over their actions.

Last but not least, keep in mind that the above information is just a basic overview of the laws around workers' compensation. Each case is unique in its own way, and you are probably going to have a lot of questions and concerns. The Whisler Law Firm is here to answer those questions and to help you secure a just result.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can visit [whislerlawfirm.com](https://www.whislerlawfirm.com) and access our highly informative webinars any time!

Also, sign up for a complimentary Will or Trust consultation!

Questions?

Call 833-529-5677

"Happiness is not something ready made. It comes from your own actions."

— The Dali Lama



RHUBARB OAT BARS

Inspired by [TasteOfHome.com](https://www.tasteofhome.com)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 cups fresh rhubarb, chopped
- 1 cup packed brown sugar, divided
- 1 tsp fresh lemon juice
- 4 tbsp water, divided
- 4 tsp cornstarch
- 1 cup old-fashioned oats
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup sweetened shredded coconut
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/3 cup butter, melted

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 F and grease an 8-inch square baking dish.
2. In a medium saucepan, bring rhubarb, 1/2 cup brown sugar, lemon juice, and 3 tbsp water to a boil.
3. Reduce heat to medium and cook until rhubarb is tender (about 5 minutes).
4. In a small bowl, combine cornstarch and remaining water, stirring until smooth.
5. Gradually add to the rhubarb mixture, return to a boil, and cook until thickened. Remove from heat and set aside.
6. In a large bowl, combine oats, flour, coconut, salt, and remaining brown sugar. Stir in butter until mixture is crumbly.
7. Press half of the oat mixture into the prepared baking dish, spread rhubarb mixture on top, then sprinkle with remaining oat mixture.
8. Bake 25–30 minutes until golden brown. Cool completely before enjoying!