

Sam Walters

Assistant Coach / Recruiting Coordinator

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Biography

The Cal Poly men's basketball program's designated recruiting coordinator, Sam Walters is in his third season as an assistant coach with the Mustangs.

Having helped assemble one of the nation's most diverse lineups, Walters – who leads international players through the recruitment, admissions and visa processes – has also assisted Cal Poly's advancement as one of the country's top-ranked offensive squads.

Cal Poly's 2025-26 roster featured standouts from nine different countries – the second highest total in Division I – and represented all six of the world's habitable continents/regions. On the court, that lineup finished 10th nationally with 10.8 three-pointers per game, 19th with 358 total three-pointers and recorded Cal Poly's highest Big West victory total in 13 seasons.

Cal Poly also finished Walters's initial 2024-25 season third nationally with 11.5 three-pointers per game while setting new program single season records for total points, three-pointers and field goals as the Mustangs reached their first Big West Championship semifinal in 11 years.

The Mustangs have twice averaged 82.1 points per game with Walters while scoring 90-plus points 20 times. Individually, Cal Poly has enjoyed four All-Big West selections in two years with Walters after producing just four in the previous six seasons.

"Sam has done a remarkable job helping our international student-athletes navigate the process," DeGeorge said. "His intelligence and attention to detail have made it clear he's ready to coordinate our recruiting efforts."

Walters arrived at Cal Poly after serving the previous two seasons as an assistant coach at two-year West Valley College (Saratoga, Calif.). With Walters, West Valley closed the 2023-24 season with a 33-0 mark and the California Community College Athletic Association State Championship.

Prior to West Valley, Walters was an assistant coach at Division III UC Santa Cruz (2019-22), initially under fellow second-year Cal Poly assistant coach Ron DuBois then as the program's interim head coach for six months in 2021. He eventually reverted to an assistant coaching role at UC Santa Cruz for the 2021-22

season.

A three-year performer as a guard with UC Santa Barbara, Walters – after redshirting for the Gauchos during his 2014-15 freshman season and graduating in 2018 – transferred to Division II Colorado Mesa for a 2018-19 graduate season. Playing for DeGeorge at Colorado Mesa, Walters started 28 of 29 games in his one year with the Mavericks, averaged 7.4 points per appearance and shot 41.7 percent from three-point range and 84.1 percent from the free throw line. He completed his master's degree in sports management from Colorado Mesa in 2019.

"Sam was an all-time teammate and leader when we were fortunate enough to have him as a player [at Colorado Mesa]," DeGeorge said. "When we signed Sam, we needed to bring in guys that were committed to excellence. No one is more committed to excellence than Sam. He's bright, articulate, organized, leads by example and has been an incredible asset in all aspects of the program."

Not the first Cal Poly coach in the family, Walters is the cousin of Mustang volleyball head coach Caroline Walters. Playing for his father, Stu, at Soquel HS in Santa Cruz County, Walters was twice named Santa Cruz Coast Athletic League Co-Most Valuable Player. Also a two-time All-SCCAL first team honoree, he averaged 21.0 points and 6.0 rebounds per game during his 2013-14 senior season.
