

Western Carolina Scholarship Committee:

Who is Zachary Franklin? Well I am hoping by the end of this letter you will have a better idea... I am excited to be attending Western Carolina in the fall as a Freshman, and this is how the journey began.

I have always had a zest for life. I love to joke and have a good time with friends and family. I have always rather been outside than indoors. I enjoy many outdoor activities but baseball being my favorite. From a young age I was introduced to baseball by my grandfathers and dad. I have played on a team since the age of 4. I tried and played several sports during my younger school years and also started to play on a travel team for baseball. My dad was able to be my coach for most of my years played, which had its ups and downs. Now looking back, I can say I was very fortunate to have him as my coach and to have spent that time with him. I guess that became more of a realization when I suddenly lost one of my grandfathers. He was one of my biggest supporters. Looking around I realized I had many supporters. I had a dream where he told me to never give up on my dreams. During these younger years I found a passion for pitching and set a goal that one day I wanted to pitch for the Red Sox. Starting junior high I expressed to focus fully on baseball. My parents were supportive and gave me opportunities to grow in my sport. Through this sport I have learned many life lessons and gained lifelong friendships. The road to our dreams is not always an easy one and you must stay focused and lean on your family. I was not expecting the amount of attention I would receive after my 2016 state games, but there it was. I was truly humbled by the schools that were showing interest in me. It was very overwhelming and I was grateful to have my parents there to lean on for support and advice. The summer was full of college visits, games, calls more visits and decisions to make. To be honest Western was not on my list of colleges to pursue. Late summer WCU saw me play and reached out. Again I really had no interest, mostly because a lot of my home town attends Western. After several conversations with Western I decided to visit, after all, I had never been to campus before. I went keeping an open mind. It did not take long for me to feel that WNC was a contender! The Baseball staff gave me the full tour and as we went around I just got that feeling, the feeling I had not had with any other school. I was made to feel at home, that they cared about my future in school and baseball. Even though I was 99% sure this was my school I asked to have a day to think it over. My family and I reviewed by options and the decision was mine to make. My family was willing for me to attend were ever my heart lead. I prayed as so many times I had over the summer that I would have a sign and peace in my decision. The signs and peace with my decision was there. Hard work and perseverance had finally paid off! I am so blessed and can't wait to start a new chapter in life as a Catamount!! I am keeping my mind open and my dreams in the horizon. Thank you for the opportunity to attend Western. New friends and adventures await.

Sincerely,

Zachary A. Franklin

