



This Butler Alum Helps Professional Athletes Do Their Taxes

By Megan Collins '22

We patiently anticipate the feeling every year: Your heart racing as you inch closer and closer to the edge of your seat. There are less than ten seconds left on the shot clock. You hear that distinct sound of sneakers squeaking on polished hardwood floors, and the uproar of the Dawg Pound when the referee makes an unpopular call. Nothing beats it.

Nothing beats the adrenaline rush of basketball in historic Hinkle Fieldhouse.

These are the moments that led John Karaffa '91 to the idea of combining his two passions, basketball and accounting.

Karaffa describes his career path as the “best of both worlds.” As a self-proclaimed numbers guy, he knew from the start that he wanted to be part of the business world. But he couldn't fathom the idea of giving up the euphoric feeling of dribbling up and down the court—as he did for four years as part of the Men's Basketball team at Butler University, then for 12 more seasons on professional teams after graduation. So, he thought, what if he combined the two interests?

That's exactly what he did.

Two seemingly unrelated career paths collided, and after Karaffa spent more than a decade working as an accountant at U.S. multinational firms by day and playing basketball by night, [ProSport CPA](#) was born.

Since launching the sports-focused accounting firm in 2009, Karaffa has been able to develop his craft into something he says no other accounting firm in the country is able to do. ProSport CPA works with more than 1,000 professional athletes, helping clients tackle complicated taxes and other financial obstacles that are unique to the world of athletics—the same obstacles Karaffa faced during his years on the court.

“Professional athletes can earn a lot of money, but at an age when they know very little about money,” he says. “In addition to starting ProSport CPA, I wrote [Touchdown Finance](#) using the lessons I’ve learned to try to help athletes and other young people learn more about keeping more of what they earn.”

Karaffa enjoys taking the extra time to really get to know the players he works with.

“It’s really neat to get to speak with athletes and entertainers who are the best at what they do,” he says. “It’s humbling to think that they have the same respect for me.”

And Karaffa attributes the stepping stones of his own success to the foundations he built at Butler. He took advantage of every opportunity that came his way, building life-long relationships while studying Accounting, all while sparking the fire for his professional basketball career.

“I am very grateful to Butler for the opportunities I had to play college basketball, to earn a degree from a prestigious school, and to get to know some great, motivated people,” he says.