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Caption: Adams Academy athlete Connor Swanberg, with his coaches, from left, Conor McNeill, Cory Miles and Kerry Hill.

High-performing local athletes are being given the opportunity to apply for membership of the Bay of Plenty's most prestigious gym.

The University of Waikato Adams Centre for High Performance has announced a membership for talented, local athletes destined for national and/or international competition.

Athletes who meet the high-performance entry criteria are being encouraged to apply for The Adams Academy.

The Centre's Venue Manager Gabriela Flessak says the concept behind the initiative is to provide athletes with a comprehensive, sport-specific performance support membership. They will have personalised strength and conditioning programming, access to a full range of support services and use of the Olympic-quality gym. Application forms are available at www.uowadamshpc.co.nz, with membership costing \$35 per week.

Applicants must be 15 years-of-age and over with their application endorsed by a sporting organisation. They must either be part of a national squad (open or age group) or be a regional representative (or equivalent) who has placed in the top 10 nationally in their age group.

Cory Miles, who is the Adams Academy head strength and conditioning coach, says the membership opportunity should be a hugely exciting to anyone serious about their sport.

“It’s a great opportunity for young athletes to take their talent further. Talent alone will only get you so far.

“Academy athletes will receive personalised programmes based on academic research that ensures they optimise their training potential and time invested. They will also get top coaches and second-to-none facilities. Training here means mixing entirely with high-calibre athletes which tends to set a much higher standard around effort and intention,” Cory says.

Adams Academy athletes will be looked after by Cory who has completed Masters’ studies in sport, health and human performance and is focused on programme design and delivery, athlete monitoring and testing. Coaches Conor McNeill and Kerry Hill will also be involved. Conor, a University of Waikato PHD student, is completing his PHD in eccentric resistance training and has had recent experience working with American elite athletes at the Olympic Training Centre in Colorado. He will assist with strength and power testing as well as programme design. Meanwhile, speed and agility training is Kerry’s strength. Kerry has coached five of the eight fastest Kiwis ever, nine Olympians, is currently overseeing speed training for the NZ Men’s Sevens team, and was the original Head of Strength and Conditioning at the Millennium Institute in Auckland.

The first athlete already signed up to the Adams Academy is Connor Swanberg, 17, a Mt Maunganui swimmer/surf athlete. Last year Connor made the U19 finals in the NZ Surf Lifesaving Championships in the Ironman event (a combination of ski, board and swim). He will compete again this year.

Connor says it’s “a huge honour” to train at the Adams Centre of High Performance. .

“The trainers are really knowledgeable, and the facilities are great, and those things combined make it easier to improve and be truly focused. I’m here three times a week doing mainly full-body workouts, weights and free-weights,” Connor says.

Cory says there are currently about eight Adams Academy athletics, most of whom have transitioned from a former TECT-funded opportunity. Their sporting involvement includes sport climbing, surf lifesaving, short-course swimming, triathlons, water polo and volleyball. Cory’s background, meanwhile, is in waka ama and boxing – both of which have taken him around the world.

Adams Academy membership entitles each athlete to three sessions per week, from Monday to Friday between 4pm and 6pm. Membership includes strength and conditioning, sport-specific performance testing, use of the high-performance gym, access to Adams Centre facilities, subsidised use of Body in Motion physiotherapy treatment, and invitations to high-performance seminars covering a range of topics including physiology, female athletes, psychology, injury prevention and nutrition.

The University of Waikato Adams Centre for High Performance is in Mt Maunganui, alongside Blake Park.

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