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Northeast Conference Announces 2017 Fall Scholar-Athletes, Academic Honor Roll & Commissioner's Honor Roll

Somerset, NJ -- The Northeast Conference (NEC) today recognized an impressive group of student-athletes with the announcement of its 2017 Fall Scholar-Athlete award winners, presented by Certified Financial Services.

Among those honored were two CoSIDA Academic All-Americans, an NCAA Senior CLASS Award finalist, a pair of NEC individual champions and a student-athlete with a perfect 4.0 grade point average.

All scholar-athlete award winners must have earned a minimum of 60 semester hours at their institution, maintained a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.20 and participated with distinction as a member of a varsity team.

Along with the scholar-athletes, the NEC announced its Fall Academic Honor Roll, consisting of 765 student-athletes with a 3.20 or better grade point average, a 12.5 percent increase from 2016. There were also 241 student-athletes named to the Commissioner's Honor Roll, recognizing those superior student-athletes with a 3.75 or better grade point average. The Commissioner's Honor Roll figure represents a 7.1 percent increase from a year ago.

Saint Francis U senior **Bryce England (Williamsburg, PA/Williamsburg)** repeated as the men's cross country scholar-athlete honoree. England was in peak form at the NEC Championship in New Britain, CT this past October, crossing the tape in 25:37.2 to win his first individual title by over 17 seconds and help lead the Red Flash to a third place showing. It marked the fourth top-10 finish and fourth All-NEC honor in his storied career. England went on to place tenth at the NCAA Mid-Atlantic Regional. He was a three-time NEC Athlete of the Week who also won the Ted Owen Invitational in September. The Williamsburg, PA native, who was named to the CoSIDA Academic All-District team, has now collected four NEC scholar-athlete awards in his career (two in cross country, and one each in indoor and outdoor track and field). England is a four-time member of the NEC Academic and Commissioner's Honor Roll and has registered a 3.97 grade point average while double majoring in Biology/Pre-Med and Spanish.

Sacred Heart senior **Kate Svensen (Medway, MA/Bishop Feehan)** claimed the women's cross country scholar-athlete award. Svensen dominated the competition at the NEC Championship in October to spark the Pioneers to their fourth conference title in the last five years. In winning the race by nearly 38 seconds, she posted a time of 17:24.3 to earn the second All-NEC honor of her career. Svensen was also the top SHU finisher at the ECAC/IC4A meet, earning All-East accolades for the second consecutive year while shaving 30 seconds off her 2016 time. The Medway, MA product won two other races in the fall, taking first at both the Ted Owen and Stony Brook Invitationals, and was a three-time NEC Athlete of the Week. Svensen, a Nursing major, carries a 3.77 grade point average. She has been named to the NEC Academic and Commissioner's Honor Roll lists in each of her four years at SHU.

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Robert Morris junior linebacker **Adam Wollet (Poland, OH/Poland Seminary)** earned the football scholar-athlete award. Wollet led the NEC and ranked 18th nationally with 9.8 tackles per game en-route to second team All-NEC honors. With 108 tackles on the year, he became the first RMU player since 2013 to eclipse 100 in a single season. Wollet recorded at least ten takedowns in seven games this past fall, including a career-high 16 against Sacred Heart on October 21. He capped the year by becoming the fifth student-athlete in RMU football history to earn CoSIDA Academic All-America honors with his selection to the second team. Wollet, a three-time NEC Academic and Commissioner's Honor Rolls honoree who hails from Poland, OH, carries a perfect 4.0 grade point average. He majors in Finance and Management.

Fairleigh Dickinson redshirt junior striker **Ahu Obhakhan (Drogheda, Ireland/St. Joseph CBS)** took home men's soccer scholar-athlete honors. Obhakhan led the Knights and ranked fifth in the NEC in both goals (seven) and points (16). He was tabbed to the All-NEC second team after helping lead the Knights to a third place regular season finish and a berth in the NEC Tournament. Obhakhan's most prestigious honor came when he earned a spot on the CoSIDA Academic All-America third team, the first such recipient in FDU soccer history. A native of Drogheda, Ireland and Business Management major, Obhakhan has compiled a 3.93 grade point average while a member of the Knights. He is a three-time member of both the NEC Academic Honor Roll and NEC Commissioner's Honor Roll.

Saint Francis U junior defender **Allison LaDuke (Greensburg, PA/Greater Latrobe)** repeated as the women's soccer scholar-athlete of the year. LaDuke, a Greensburg, PA native, made it back-to-back All-NEC first team honors as the Red Flash defended their NEC Tournament title. She was the backbone of a stout defense that posted eight shutouts, conceded just four goals in conference play and allowed a lone tally in SFU's run to a fourth NEC crown. An NEC All-Rookie selection back in 2014, LaDuke is a four-time selection to the NEC Academic and Commissioner's Honor Roll. She is a Physician Assistant major who maintains a 3.90 grade point average.

Central Connecticut senior middle blocker **Maddie Smith (Pleasanton, CA/Foothill)** was the recipient of the women's volleyball scholar-athlete accolade. Smith earned second team All-NEC recognition in helping the Blue Devils to a share of the program's first NEC regular season title since 2003 and a berth in the conference title match. She was a two-time NEC Player of the Week and also earned NEC Defensive Player of the Week accolades on November 6. Smith finished the year as the league leader with 1.46 blocks per set, a figure that ranked her 14th nationally. Her 161 total blocks placed her second on the CCSU single-season list and her 14 blocks against SHU on November 3 marked the most in a conference match in nearly four years. Smith also led the NEC with a .377 hitting percentage, the second-highest single-season mark in CCSU history. The Pleasanton, CA native ended her career as a four-time member of the NEC Academic and Commissioner's Honor Roll. Smith, who carries a 3.96 grade point average, was named to the CoSIDA Academic All-District first team at year's end. She double majors in Marketing and Management.

2017 Northeast Conference Fall Scholar-Athletes, Presented by Certified Financial Services

Sport	Name	School	Cl	GPA	Major
Men's Cross Country	Bryce England	Saint Francis U	Sr	3.97	Biology/Pre-Med & Spanish
Women's Cross Country	Kate Svensen	Sacred Heart	Sr	3.77	Nursing
Football	Adam Wollet	Robert Morris	Jr	4.00	Finance & Management
Men's Soccer	Ahu Obhakhan	Fairleigh Dickinson	R-Jr	3.93	Business Management
Women's Soccer	Allison LaDuke	Saint Francis U	Jr	3.90	Physician Assistant
Women's Volleyball	Maddie Smith	Central Connecticut	Sr	3.96	Marketing & Management.

About The Northeast Conference

Now in its 37th year, the Northeast Conference is an NCAA Division I collegiate athletic association consisting of 10 institutions of higher learning located throughout six states. Media coverage of the NEC extends to four of the largest markets in the United States - New York (#1), Pittsburgh (#23), Baltimore (#27), and Hartford/New Haven (#30). Founded in 1981 as the basketball-only ECAC Metro Conference, the NEC has grown to sponsor 22 championship sports for men and women and now enjoys automatic access to 14 different NCAA Championships. NEC member institutions include Bryant, Central Connecticut, Fairleigh Dickinson, LIU Brooklyn, Mount St. Mary's, Robert Morris, Sacred Heart, St. Francis Brooklyn, Saint Francis U and Wagner. For more information on the NEC, visit the league's official website (www.northeastconference.org) and digital network (www.necfrontrow.com), or follow the league on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Snapchat, all @NECsports.