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Northeast Conference Announces 2018 Spring Scholar-Athletes, Academic Honor Roll & Commissioner's Honor Roll

Somerset, NJ -- An elite collection of student-athletes were honored today by the Northeast Conference (NEC) as 2018 Spring Scholar-Athlete award winners, presented by Certified Financial Services.

The outstanding group of honorees included seven repeat winners, the male and female NEC Student-Athlete of the Year honorees, a pair of Academic All-Americans, four Academic All-District honorees, an NEC Player of the Year, two positional NEC Player of the Year award winners, and ten student-athletes with at least a 3.90 grade point average.

Robert Morris, Sacred Heart, Saint Francis U and Wagner earned two awards apiece, along with one each for Bryant, Fairleigh Dickinson, LIU Brooklyn and Saint Joseph's.

All scholar-athlete award winners have compiled 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 also announced its Spring Academic Honor Roll, consisting of 1,111 student-athletes with a 3.20 or better grade-point average. There were also 293 student-athletes named to the spring Commissioner's Honor Roll, recognizing those superior student-athletes with a 3.75 or better grade point average.

Over the course of the 2017-18 academic year, a league record 2,476 NEC student-athletes landed a spot on the Academic Honor Roll, a 12.6 percent increase from a year ago. That figure also represents over 60 percent of the NEC's competitors. Likewise, a record 720 student-athletes were named to the Commissioner's Honor Roll, a 21.6 percent jump from 2016-17.

Wagner senior infielder **Nick Mascelli (Clifton, NJ/Seton Hall Prep)** claimed the baseball scholar-athlete award. Mascelli finished his career as Wagner's all-time hits leader with 252 over his four years on Grymes Hill. He also ranks second in runs (161), third in walks (93), fourth in games started (206) and fifth in games played (206). This past season, Mascelli led the NEC with 60 runs scored, and ranked third in doubles (16) and seventh in hits (61). The Clifton, NJ product hit .280 with six homers, 25 RBIs and eight stolen bases in nine attempts for a Seahawk squad that won a share of the NEC regular season championship and set new program records with 38 overall wins and 21 conference victories. Named to the NEC Academic Honor Roll in each of his four years, Mascelli graduated with a 3.72 cumulative GPA as a Finance major.

Saint Francis U senior **Brandon Mihalo's (Windsor, Ontario/Holy Name Catholic)** repeated as the men's golf scholar-athlete honoree. Mihalo was tabbed to the All-NEC first team for the second straight year after ranking second in the conference with a 73.8 stroke average in 2017-18. He finished sixth at the NEC Championship in Daytona Beach, FL, his third consecutive top-10 showing. Mihalo, who shot a three-over 219 (74-74-71) at the event to finish three strokes back, led the Red Flash with four top-10 finishes on the year. Mihalo is a four-time member of the NEC Academic and Commissioner's Honor Roll. The Accounting major from Windsor, Ontario compiled a 3.95 grade point average during his time at SFU.

A near perfect GPA coupled with a successful season on the links earned Sacred Heart senior **Abigail Hood (Gloucester, MA/Rockport)** women's golf scholar-athlete honors. Hood was named to the All-NEC second team for the third time following a campaign that saw her rack up four top-10 finishes and compile an 81.1 stroke average. She carded her third consecutive fourth place finish and fourth top-10 showing of her career to help lead SHU to second place at the NEC Championship in Daytona Beach, FL this past April. The Gloucester, MA product graduated with a 3.98 grade point average and earned degrees in Sociology and Education. She won SHU's John Croffy Award for highest graduating GPA of any student-athlete in the senior class. Hood is now a four-time selection to both the NEC Academic and Commissioner's Honor Roll.

Accomplished Saint Joseph's senior attacker **Chris Blewitt (Lincoln Park, NJ/Bergen Catholic)** made it back-to-back scholar-athlete honors in men's lacrosse. Blewitt was voted to the All-NEC first team for the second straight year after recording team-bests with 25 goals, 23 assists and 48 points as the Hawks secured the NEC regular season title for the fourth time in the last five years with a perfect 6-0 record. He ranked in the NEC top-10 in all three categories and also paced the circuit with four game-winning goals on the year. Blewitt earned a slew of honors at season's end, highlighted by his selection to the CoSIDA Academic All-America third team and Senior CLASS Award All-America second team. Blewitt was also named the Academic All-Area Co-Performer of the Year by the Philadelphia Inquirer and won the Saint Joseph's Class of 1950 Award as the school's top graduating student-athlete. The 2015 NEC Rookie of the Year was a two-time NEC Player of the Week and was named to the USILA Team of the Week on April 17. Blewitt, a native of Lincoln Park, NJ, graduated with a 3.90 grade point average as a Finance and Economics double major. He was a four-time member of the NEC Academic and Commissioner's Honor Roll.

Robert Morris senior defender **Zachary Bryant (Oshawa, Ontario/Monsignor John Pereyma)** shared NEC scholar-athlete honors in men's lacrosse. In a landmark campaign that included the program's first NEC Tournament title and first NCAA Tournament victory, Bryant was named the NEC Defensive Player of the Year and was selected as a USILA Honorable Mention All-America. He also earned NEC All-Tournament honors. The two-time All-NEC first team honoree led the conference with 38 caused turnovers and ranked eighth nationally with 2.06 caused turnovers per game. He also scooped up 36 ground balls. Bryant's 77 career caused turnovers ranks second in school history. At year's end, he was selected in the fifth round of the 2018 Major League Lacrosse Draft by the Ohio Machine. Bryant was named the 2018 Presidential Scholar-Athlete at the annual RMU All-Sports Banquet after posting a 3.90 grade point average. The Biology major from Oshawa, Ontario was named to the NEC Academic and Commissioner's Honor Roll in each of his four years.

Robert Morris senior midfielder **Dana Davis (Garnet Valley, PA/Garnet Valley)** made it back-to-back women's lacrosse scholar-athlete awards. Davis earned All-NEC first team recognition for the second year in a row following her second team selection in 2016 and All-Rookie honor as a freshman. In helping spark the Colonials to a fifth straight NEC Tournament appearance, the all-around performer concluded the year with 20 goals and five assists, while also recording 30 ground balls, 50 draw controls and 20 caused turnovers. Davis wrapped her career as the program's all-time leader in ground balls (184), games played (68) and games started (68), and ranks second in caused turnovers (98), third in draw controls (145), and sixth in goals (102) and points (133). The Garnet Valley, PA product was also selected to play in the 2018 IWLC Senior All-Star game. The biggest honor of her career came in June when she was selected as the NEC Female Scholar-Athlete of the Year, an award that encompasses athletic and academic success, as well as community service and leadership. Davis registered a 3.92 grade point average as a Nursing major. She was a four-time NEC Academic and Commissioner's Honor Roll honoree.

Sacred Heart junior pitcher **Emily Orosco (Camarillo, CA/Aldolfo Camarillo)** was at the top of her game on both the mound and in the classroom on her way to softball scholar-athlete accolades. Orosco earned NEC Co-Pitcher of the Year and Most Improved Player honors after posting a 14-5 record with six shutouts and a league-leading 1.34 ERA in 2018. The All-NEC first team honoree also paced the circuit with 206 strikeouts and finished 7-1 with a conference-low 0.64 ERA in league play. Orosco, who hails from Camarillo, CA, was chosen to the NFCA All-Region third team. Orosco recently earned a prestigious honor when she was named to the CoSIDA Academic All-America third team. She is a three-time member of the NEC Academic and Commissioner's Honor Roll. Orosco majors in Biology and has attained a near-perfect 3.98 grade point average.

Wagner senior **Charlton Boyd (Shreveport, LA/Loyola College Prep)** earned a share of the men's tennis scholar-athlete of the year award for the second straight year. Boyd was recently named the NEC Male Student-Athlete of the Year for his exemplary work on the court, in the classroom and in the community. Athletically, he was named to the All-NEC second team for the second time in his career and helped guide Wagner to its first NEC finals appearance. In posting a stellar 27-3 record on the year, Boyd led the NEC in both victories and win percentage (.900). He became the first Seahawk to post 20 or more wins, and now holds three of the top-five single-season win totals in program history. Boyd recorded a program-record 75 singles victories, finishing with a career 75-24 mark, and added 65 wins in doubles play. He also became just the second Seahawk to be ranked by the ITA, when he was slotted in at 104th in the nation back in November. The Shreveport, LA native, who received his undergraduate degree in Government & Politics, was named to the CoSIDA Academic All-District At-Large team for the second-time in his career. Prior to graduation, he was honored with the 2018 Dr. Donald W. Spiro Award for Outstanding Academic & Co-Curricular Achievements, presented to the most outstanding Wagner graduating senior for overall excellence. Likewise, he earned the 2018 Phyllis Andors Award, in recognition for outstanding performance in Government & Politics, while also claiming the 2018 Barna Csuros Memorial Award, presented to an accomplished student pursuing law. Boyd's post-graduate plans include attending George Washington University Law School, where he will study Constitutional Law. He graduated with a 3.98 cumulative grade point average and was a four-time member of both the NEC Academic and Commissioner's Honor Roll.

Bryant redshirt junior **Matt Kuhar (Smithfield, RI/Smithfield)** made history on the court this past season, and capped his year by repeating as the NEC's co-scholar-athlete in men's tennis. Kuhar became the first nationally ranked player in Bryant tennis history, finishing the year No. 121 in the ITA rankings. He unanimously repeated as NEC Player of the Year and added ITA Northeast Most Improved Senior Honors to his list of accolades. Kuhar finished with a 26-8 overall record, including a 20-4 mark at No. 1 singles. He recorded a perfect 5-0 against NEC opponents. In non-conference play, he secured a win over Cal's Billy Griffith, the 41st-ranked player in the country, and was up a set on the No. 66 Ferran Calvo of Oklahoma when the match was halted. With Kuhar at the top of the lineup, Bryant won its fifth straight NEC title with the Smithfield native earning All-Tournament honors. He was also named to the All-NEC first team at #1 doubles with teammate Artur Jakubowski. His career singles record stands at 63-23, and he is 41-13 lifetime at the #1 spot and 14-1 versus league rivals. Kuhar is a Finance major who has compiled a 3.70 grade point average. He has been named to the NEC Academic Honor Roll four times.

LIU Brooklyn junior **Malin Leysen (Leuven, Belgium/Koninklijk Atheneum)** was the recipient of the women's tennis scholar-athlete of the year award. Leysen earned a spot on the All-NEC first team for the second straight year as the Blackbirds repeated as NEC Tournament champion. She also landed on the All-NEC second team in doubles along with partner Jennifer Gogova. Leysen compiled an 18-8 slate in singles, won all six of her conference matches and posted an 8-3 mark at the #4 spot. She is now a combined 33-11 overall and 14-0 against league rivals over the last two years. Leysen, who has earned a spot on the NEC Academic and Commissioner's Honor Roll in each of her three years at LIU, maintains a 3.92 grade point average. The Leuven, Belgium native is a Sociology-Anthropology major.

Saint Francis U senior **Bryce England (Williamsburg, PA/Williamsburg)** ended his career in style, repeating as the scholar-athlete winner in men's outdoor track and field to secure his second straight NEC "Triple Crown." England has now swept NEC scholar-athlete awards in cross country, indoor and outdoor track in each of his last two years to make it six honors in his storied career at SFU. He was a double winner in the 5,000 and 10,000 meter races at the NEC Championship for the second straight year and earned his second consecutive NEC Most Outstanding Track Performer honor in the distance events. England won by more than 10 seconds in the 5K (14:32.85) and topped the field by nearly six seconds in the 10K (31:12.59) to secure a pair of IC4A qualifying times. In doing so, he became one of five Red Flash competitors to earn All-NEC honors four times in their career. His 10th place finish as the NCAA Mid-Atlantic Regional was also the best by an SFU male athlete since the 2003 season. England landed a spot on the CoSIDA Academic All-District team for the second year running. The Williamsburg, PA native graduated with degrees in both Biology and Spanish, and compiled a 3.97 grade point average during his time in Loretto. He was a four-time selection to the NEC Academic and Commissioner's Honor Roll.

Fairleigh Dickinson senior **Mae Thompson (Esher, England/Hinchely Wood School)** was also a repeat winner, taking home women's outdoor track and field scholar-athlete honors. Thompson defended her 800 meter title at the NEC outdoor meet in May, crossing the tape in 2:13.01 to win her specialty for the third straight year. She went on to compete in the 800 meters at the ECAC Championships. Thompson, who hails from Esher, England, also garnered NEC scholar-athlete honors in women's indoor track and field this winter. The Humanities major was named to the NEC Academic and Commissioner's Honor Roll four straight years and graduated with a 3.95 grade point average.

2018 Northeast Conference Spring Scholar-Athletes, Presented by Certified Financial Services

Sport	Name	School	Cl	GPA	Major
Baseball	Nick Mascelli	Wagner	Sr	3.72	Finance
Men's Golf	Brandon Mihalo	Saint Francis U	Sr	3.95	Accounting
Women's Golf	Abigail Hood	Sacred Heart	Sr	3.98	Sociology & Education
Men's Lacrosse	Chris Blewitt	Saint Joseph's	Sr	3.90	Finance & Economics
	Zach Bryant	Robert Morris	Sr	3.90	Biology
Women's Lacrosse	Dana Davis	Robert Morris	Sr	3.92	Nursing
Softball	Emily Orosco	Sacred Heart	Jr	3.98	Biology
Men's Tennis	Charlton Boyd	Wagner	Sr	3.98	Government & Politics
	Matt Kuhar	Bryant	R-Jr	3.70	Finance
Women's Tennis	Malin Leysen	LIU Brooklyn	Jr	3.92	Sociology-Anthropology
Men's Outdoor Track & Field	Bryce England	Saint Francis U	Sr	3.97	Biology & Spanish
Women's Outdoor Track & Field	Mae Thompson	Fairleigh Dickinson	Sr	3.95	Humanities

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.