



News Release

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NCC Honors

Women's Honor Athletes for North Central Conference Announced

Sioux Falls, S.D. -- Seven outstanding female student-athletes have been honored by the North Central Conference as the league's Honor Athletes for the 2008-09 academic year.

Each school selected its top student-athlete on the basis of academic performance, athletic ability and performance and leadership in campus and community activities. In addition, each student-athlete must have graduated this spring or be within 12 credit hours of graduation. The select group will be honored at the NCC Celebration Dinner June 21 in Sioux Falls, S.D. and are finalists for the NCC Scholar-Athlete Award which will be announced at the dinner.

The honored student-athletes with the schools they represent are: Danielle Beckstrand, Minnesota Duluth; Lynndi Decker, Minnesota State; Heidi Evans, North Dakota; Ashley Homan, St. Cloud State; Danielle McCawley, Nebraska-Omaha; Jill Smolczyk, South Dakota.

Here is a summary on each honored athlete:

Danielle Beckstrand, Minnesota Duluth, Volleyball, Baudette, Minn. - Received this year's E.L. "Duce" Rasmussen Award as UMD's top female senior scholar athlete...Maintains a 3.62 cumulative grade point average as an elementary education major (she'll receive her degree next fall) and qualified for the NCC Commissioner's Honor Roll in each of the past two seasons...2007 NCC All-Academic Team selection...Volleyball representative on UMD's Athletic Academic Support Center List for compiling the best grade point average of any Bulldog during both the 2006-07 school year...Started three years and attained AVCA All-North Central Region (honorable mention), All-NCC (honorable mention), and North Central Regional All-Tournament acclaim as a senior...A 2004 graduate of Lake of the Woods High School...Captained UMD to a 29-2 overall record and its fourth straight NCC title this past fall.

Lynndi Decker, Minnesota State, Softball, Des Moines, Iowa - Owns a 4.00 grade point average and is majoring in Graphic Design...As of May 1, leads Minnesota State in batting average (.406, ranks 100th nationally), runs scored (36), hits (67), triples (4, ranks 65th in nation in triples per game) and at bats (165)...Second on the team in steals (16)...Saw her streak of 203 consecutive games played and started come to an end at the Missouri Western Invitational due to an injury on March 21...Leads MSU with 15 multi-hit games including six three-hit games and two four hit games...Has six multi-RBI games...Had a season-high and team-high nine game hitting streak earlier in the year...Owns MSU career records for hits (257), runs (142), at bats (726) and steals (46)...Ranks second at MSU in career games played (222)..Named Academic All-NCC in 2006, 2007 and 2008...Named a 2007 CoSIDA First-Team Academic All-American and First Team Academic All-District by ESPN the Magazine...Named to 2007 All-NCC First Team, Daktronics First-Team All-Northwest Region, and Second-Team All-Region by the NFCA...Three-time member of NCC Commissioner's Honor Roll...Eight-time member of the MSU Dean's List...Team captain as a senior is a Maverick Achievement Award recipient as a senior scholar-athlete...2008 Georgene Brock Award recipient as MSU Athletics senior student-athlete of the year...Served as a member of the MSU SAAC (Student Athletic Advisory Committee).

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Heidi Evans, University of North Dakota, Cross Country/Track & Field, Roseau, Minn. - Has a 3.673 grade point average in physical education...In her career, Evans is a three-time All-American (Indoor track; Outdoor track; Cross Country) and has earned nine letters in three sports at UND (four-year volleyball letterwinner, four-year track letterwinner, one-year cross country letterwinner)...In 2008, she was a NCC Female Track Athlete of the Week (April 9, April 22)...Has qualified for the NCAA Outdoor Championships in the 800-meter (provisional), the 1,500-meter (automatic) and 3,000-meter (provisional)...Broke the school outdoor record in the 1,500-meter (4:24.66)...Took fifth place in the 800-meter at the Azusa Pacific Invitational; time of 2:10.71 was a personal best, provisional qualifying time for the NCAA Outdoor Championships and the third-fastest time in UND outdoor history...Finished 15th in the 1,500-meter at the Mt. SAC Relays (broke the school record; automatically qualified for the NCAA Outdoor Championships)...Took seventh place in the 1,500-meter at the Drake Relays (4:29.22)...Finished in fourth place in the 3,000-meter at the Florida State University Relays (9:59.72); was one of just four entrants in the race to crack the 10-minute barrier...2007 NCAA Cross Country All-American (finished 30th at NCAA cross country meet)...2007 NCAA Indoor Track & Field All-American (finished 6th in 800-meter run)...2007 NCAA Outdoor Track & Field All-American (finished 4th in the 1500-meter run)...2007 North Central Conference outdoor champion in the 1500-meter run (set NCC record for fastest time)...2007 North Central Conference indoor champion in the 800-meter and mile run...2006-07 University of North Dakota Female Athlete of the Year...2007 Academic All-North Central Conference Track & Field Team...2006 Academic All-North Central Conference Volleyball Team...2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 United States Track and Cross Country Coaches Association All-Academic Track Team...2007 United States Track and Cross Country Coaches Association All-Academic Cross Country Team...UND Scholar Athlete of the Month in September 2006 and November 2007..2007 - Cross Country Athlete of the Week for September 25th...2007 - All-NCC in Cross Country...2006 - NCAA National qualified in the 800-meter run both indoor and outdoor...2006, 2007, 2008 - Voted UND Track team Most Valuable Runner...2007 - Voted UND Most Valuable Cross Country Runner...2007 - CoSIDA District VII All-Academic 2nd Team...2008 - UND Track Team Captain...Before UND: A 2003 graduate of Roseau High School, where she was a six-time letterwinner in track & field and a five-time letterwinner in volleyball...Majoring in physical education...Has 3.673 grade point average through the 2007 fall semester...Plans to pursue a career as a personal fitness trainer...Also getting her teaching certificate and is currently student teaching.

Ashley Homan, St. Cloud State University, Softball, Cottage Grove, Minn. - Four-year starter...Named All-NCC for the fourth consecutive season...Named Academic All-NCC...Started all 56 games in right field and batted .331 with career high 20 runs and 41 RBI...Charted four doubles, and five home runs on 53 hits for 72 total bases and a slugging percentage of .450...30 walks on the season is new career high and second best season in school history...Also established new SCSU career record with 88 free passes in her four years...Closes career among SCSU all-time leaders with 23 home runs (4th), 143 RBI (3rd), 303 total bases (7th), 30 doubles (8th), 211 starts (8th), 204 hits (8th), and 635 at-bats (10th)...On-base percentage was a career high .455...Second most RBI on the team and ranked fourth in batting average and total hits...Batted .327 with runners on base and was even better with runners in scoring position hitting .342...With runners on third and less than two out hit a team leading .467...Twice in the 2008 season charted hit streaks of six games and in one six game stretch batted .529 (9-17) to raise average from .381 to .447 as Huskies went 6-0...Tallied 13 multi hit games including a 4-4 performance in SCSU's 8-0 win over Mayville State in the Husky Dome on 3/21 that saw her average jump 35 points after just one game...Had nine multi RBI games on the season led by a career high tying four RBI in a 15-0 rout of Bemidji State on 4/22...BSU game was the start of a three game stretch that saw Homan knock in nine runs in three games...Recorded a hit and an RBI in every game of the NCC Tournament, the only Husky to do so...On three occasions had a perfect day at the plate, and on six other occasions went either 2-3 or 3-4...On 2/6 in a 13-0 win over Northern State went 3-4 at the plate with three runs scored and two RBI and had a .600 batting average after the seasons first four games...In the NCC ranks second with 0.54 walks/game, sixth with 0.73 RBI/game, and ninth with a .455 on base %...Began college softball career by earning All-NCC honors and being named Freshman of the year in 2005 while leading SCSU to the championship game of the NCC Tournament...Would go on to become a four-time All-NCC honoree, and as a junior in 2007 earned her first Daktronics All-North Central Region honor, after charting career highs with a .341 average, 60 hits, 14 doubles, and 176 at-bats...Is a two time member of the NCC Commissioners Academic Honor Roll (2006, 2007)...A career .326 hitter...2008 Gladys Ziemer Honor Athlete Award Winner...Member of the St. Cloud State Physical Education Club since 2004...Member of the Minnesota Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (MAHPERD) since 2006...Courage Center volunteer...National Wheelchair Softball Tournament volunteer...Boys and Girls Club of Central Minnesota volunteer...Cottage Grove Athletic Association Volunteer Coach since 2005...Has worked every St. Cloud State softball clinic since arriving on campus...3.30 GPA...Physical education major.

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Danielle McCawley, Nebraska-Omaha, Soccer, Ralston, Neb. - Honors and Awards: Third-team NSCAA/adidas All-American...2006 & 2007 All-North Central Conference; 2007 NCC MVP; 2006 & 2007 NCC All-Academic Team; 2007 CoSIDA Academic All-District...2005, 2006 & 2007 NCC Commissioner's Academic Honor Roll..2006 Second Team NSCAA College Scholar All-American...2006 First Team, NSCAA All-Central Region...2007: Named to the NSCAA/adidas Division II third-team All-America squad...Was the North Central Conference MVP after scoring eight goals and three assists for 19 points...Also named to the first-team all-region team...Made the Academic All-NCC team for the third year in a row, as well as first-team all-region honors, with a 3.997 GPA...2006: Starting defender in all 22 games...Helped lead the Maverick defense to 15 shutouts...Recorded two assists on the season...Tallied an assist in the Mavericks' 5-0 shutout over NCAA Tournament qualifier Missouri Southern on 9-3-06...Earned All-North Central Conference and first team NSCAA All-Central Region honors...Named to the NCC Commissioner's Academic Honor Roll...Earned second team NSCAA College Scholar All-American honors as well as first team Academic All-NCC accolades...2005: Played in and started all 22 games as a sophomore midfielder...Named to the ESPN The Magazine Academic All-District VII second team, the Academic All-North Central Conference team and the NCC Commissioner's Academic Honor Roll with a perfect 4.00 GPA...Finished the season with four points off a goal and two assists...Assisted on the game-tying goal against Franklin Pierce in the NCAA semifinal on 12-1-05...2004: Played and started in 25 games as a freshman defender...scored a goal and added an assist 9-12-04 in a Maverick 4-1 win over Central Missouri...Finished the year with one goal and three assists for five points...Personal: Full name is Danielle Lee McCawley...Born on November 16, 1985...parents are John and Laura McCawley...Majoring in mathematics with a 3.997 GPA.

Becky Schulz, Augustana, Track & Field, Red Lake Falls, Minn. - Holds a 3.00 GPA in Nursing...Two-time indoor All-American (2004, 2005) in the high jump..Placed 5th at the Indoor NCC Championships in 2004 and 2005..2006 and 2008 Outdoor NCC Champion in high jump..Two-time outdoor All-American (2004, 2006) in the high jump...Provisional national qualifier for Outdoor NCAA Championships...*Character, Campus and Community Involvement:* FCA Leader...Got Choices Committee (promotes smart choices to students)...Augustana Nursing Student's Association...Lutheran Social Services Community Educator (help refugees learn basic English and promote health awareness)...Recreational Services Leadership Staff-Building Supervisor...Instructor for Augustana's Learn to Swim Program...YMCA Character Counts Athlete (volunteer time to read to elementary classes and talk about the pillars of character)...Nominee for FCA Honor Athlete.

Jill Smolczyk, South Dakota, Diving, Omaha, Neb. - Six-time All-American...Has a has a 3.833 GPA in Psychology...Selected to receive a NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship as she became the 16th Coyote student-athlete since 2000 to receive the prestigious honor...Earlier this year, she was named the NCAA Division II Women's Diver of the Year winning the NCAA Division II title in 1-meter diving and finished second on the 3-meter board...Helped lead the Coyotes women's swimming and diving team to a 10th place team finish in 2008. , Won the 1-meter and 3-meter diving titles at the NCC Championships as she was also the NCC Women's Diver of the Year...In all, has won four NCC diving titles and owns five school records...A member of the swimming and diving program's Unity Council...Named to the ESPN The Magazine Women's Academic All District VII At Large Squad in 2007...Has been named to the NCC Commissioner's Academic Honor Roll three straight years...Was named the recipient of the SAAC's Courage Award and also named the USD's Female Scholar-Athlete of the Year.

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