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April 14, 2009
For Immediate Release

GLIAC Announces Winter 2009 Commissioner's Award Recipients

BAY CITY, Mich. -- The Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) announced the Winter 2009 recipients of the GLIAC Commissioner's Awards for Academic and Athletic Excellence. The awards, sponsored by Meijer, Incorporated, are presented after the Fall, Winter, and Spring athletic seasons to six male and six female student-athletes that excel both in the classroom and on the fields of play. The Awards were announced in conjunction with the release of the GLIAC Winter All-Academic Teams in which student-athletes were honored for their efforts.

The six female student-athletes to receive the Winter 2009 GLIAC Commissioner's Awards are: **Jaclyn Armstrong** of Lake Superior State University; **Katie Cezat** of Hillsdale College; **Ashley St. Andrew** of Wayne State University; **Megan Starnes** of Northwood University; **Jenna Thayer** of Grand Valley State University and **Katie Wysocky** of Michigan Technological University.

The six male student-athletes to receive the Winter 2009 GLIAC Commissioner's Awards are: **Cauli Bedran** and **James Ekelberry** of Wayne State; **Thomas Buxton** of Tiffin University; **Steve Genther** of Saginaw Valley State University; **Greg Jarvis** of the University of Indianapolis and **Sean McGraw** of Ashland University.

"These 12 student-athletes exemplify the NCAA Division II philosophy of balance between academics and athletics by excelling in both areas," stated GLIAC Commissioner Tom Brown. "Our conference, along with Meijer Incorporated, feel that it is important to recognize these hard working student-athletes for their outstanding performances in the classroom and on the field of play. The GLIAC would like to thank Meijer for their generous sponsorship of the 2009 Commissioner's Awards and for helping us acknowledge the exceptional accomplishments of this group."

The following are biographies of the Winter 2009 GLIAC Commissioner's Awards recipients:

Armstrong (Haslett, Mich.), a senior center on the Laker women's basketball team, earned All-GLIAC Women's Basketball First Team honors in 2009 after finishing second in the league in scoring while averaging 17.7 points per game. She scored 584 points this season, which ranks third on LSSU's single-season scoring list. She moved up to eighth in career scoring at LSSU with 1,436 points. Armstrong was named to the 2009 ESPN "The Magazine" Academic All-America Second Team and Daktronics All-Midwest Region Second Team. She is an exercise science major with a 3.909 grade point average.

Cezat (Plymouth, Mich.) was recognized as the best women's basketball player in Division II in 2008-09. She was named the Division II "Player of the Year" by Daktronics, the Women's Basketball Coaches' Association (WBCA), and the D-II Bulletin after averaging 29 points and 16 rebounds per game for the Chargers. She led Hillsdale College to the 2009 GLIAC championship, and finished her career holding or sharing a total of 33 records, which include school records, conference records and NCAA marks. She set a new NCAA Division II record with 28 double-doubles in 2008-09, and led the nation in rebounds, blocked shots and field goals made. Katie is an Accounting major who holds a 3.5 cumulative GPA.

St. Andrew (Grand Rapids, Mich.) became the first national champion in the history of the Wayne State women's swimming and diving program, winning the 500-yard and 1000-yard freestyle events at the 2009 NCAA Division II Championships. She collected six All-America accolades in total, finishing second in the 1,650-yard freestyle and fourth in the 200-yard freestyle, and participated in two relays. St. Andrew won three individual titles at the GLIAC Championships, including her third consecutive title in the 1,000-yard freestyle and her second career title in the 500-yard freestyle. She also won the 200-yard freestyle for the first time and joined two championship relays. St. Andrew, who is a two-time GLIAC All-Academic Team selection, was voted to the 2008 ESPN the Magazine/CoSIDA Academic All-District IV College Division Women's At-Large Second Team. She has a 3.62 cumulative GPA while studying in Wayne State's Pharmacy program.

Starnes (Mt. Pleasant, Mich.) is the first Northwood student-athlete to earn the Commissioner's Award twice in her career. She finished her distinguished career on the women's basketball team ranked seventh in school history in scoring (1,246) and fourth in rebounding (707). Starnes set a Northwood record for three-point field goal percentage in a season during her senior campaign,

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connecting on 46.2 percent of shots from beyond the arc. A three-year captain for Northwood, Starnes led the Timberwolves to a school-record 21 wins and the first appearance in the NCAA Tournament in program history. She earned First Team All-GLIAC honors in both her junior and senior seasons and was recently named among the WBCA State Farm All-America Team Honorable Mentions. Starnes is a Marketing/Management major who currently has a 3.90 cumulative GPA.

Thayer (Okemos, Mich.) was a six-time All-American at the 2009 NCAA Division II Swimming & Diving Championships, pushing her career total to 21 All-America citations. Thayer was a member of the GVSU 200-yard freestyle relay team that placed sixth, the 200-yard medley team that finished ninth, and the 11th-place 400-yard freestyle relay team. She took home a 10th place finish in the 200-yard Individual Medley, finished 13th in the 200-yard breaststroke and 14th in the 100-yard breaststroke. Thayer holds a 3.888 cumulative GPA while studying Public Administration.

Wysocky (Whitefish Bay, Wis) averaged team highs of 15.0 points and 10.5 rebounds for the Michigan Tech women's basketball team, which advanced to the NCAA Elite Eight for the second time in school history. The All-America Third Team selection posted a school record 356 rebounds on the year, smashing her own record of 301. Her total of 509 points was the third-most ever at Tech. Wysocky, who owns a 3.92 grade point average in business administration, is second in career rebounds (847) and sixth in career points (1,334) with her senior season remaining.

Bedran (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) was a six-time All-American at the 2009 NCAA Division II Swimming & Diving Championships, joining three First Team relays and earning three individual Honorable Mention accolades. He also anchored two GLIAC championship relays and placed fourth in the 100-yard backstroke, tied for fourth in the 50-yard freestyle, and sixth in the 100-yard freestyle. He has garnered 17 All-America awards in his career, has been named to the WSU Athletic Director's Honor Roll (term gpa 3.5+) every semester, and serves on the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. Bedran is also a two-time GLIAC All-Academic Team selection who carries a 3.74 cumulative GPA in Political Science.

Ekleberry (Rochester Hills, Mich.) competed in all three long-distance freestyle events at the 2009 NCAA Division II Swimming & Diving Championships, placing 18th in the 1,000-yard and 1,650-yard freestyles and 24th in the 50-yard freestyle. He placed sixth in both the 1,000-yard and 1,650-yard at the 2009 GLIAC Championships, and finished 13th in the 500-yard freestyle. Ekleberry owns a 3.66 GPA in Political Science, and is a two-time GLIAC All-Academic Team honoree. He has maintained a grade-point average above 3.0 every semester at Wayne State.

Buxton (Worthington, Ohio) is the keeper of a 3.97 cumulative GPA, and is a senior Marketing major who helped lead Tiffin University's Indoor Track and Field program this winter. Thomas set a new school Distance Medley Relay (DMR) record of 10:02.48 at the DII Challenge, ending the season ranked 15th in the DMR. He set a school record at the Findlay Classic in the 4x800 with a time of 7:47.86, setting the national leading time in the event while also setting another school record in the open 800 with a time of 1:53.59, posting the top DII time in the race. He was the GLIAC runner-up in DMR, while ranking 19th in the country in the open 800. He was also a GLIAC All-Academic honoree.

Genther (Laingsburg, Mich.) had a solid Indoor Track & Field season for SVSU, provisionally qualifying for the NCAA DII Nationals in the 5,000-meter run. He placed first in the 5,000-meter run at GLIAC Indoor Track & Field Championships with a record-breaking time of 14:34.85 and followed that up with a second-place finish in the 3,000-meter run with a time of 8:34.84. In the fall, he placed ninth at the GLIAC Cross Country Championships and 18th at the Midwest Regional Championships. Genther is a three time member of the Dean's List who carries a 3.575 cumulative GPA in Management.

Jarvis (Greenwood, Ind.), a senior captain on the UIndy Swimming & Diving squad, helped the Greyhounds to a 15th place overall finish at the NCAA Division II Swimming & Diving Championships this year and a third place showing at the GLIAC Swimming & Diving Championships. Jarvis and the 400-yard medley relay team from Indy earned a 12th place finish at nationals, while as an individual he took sixth in the 50-yard freestyle and eighth in the 100-yard freestyle at the GLIAC championships. A multi-year GLIAC All-Academic selection, Jarvis holds a 3.678 GPA as a chemistry major and also ranks in the top 10 best career times in the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle at UIndy. He is also a member of the school-record holding 200-yard medley relay squad.

McGraw (Mansfield, Ohio) was part of the Ashland Swimming & Diving 200-yard freestyle relay team that won a GLIAC Championship in 2009. He was also third in the 50-yard freestyle. At nationals, in the 200-yard freestyle relay, he finished eighth. He was 10th in the 200-yard medley relay and the 400-yard freestyle relay. McGraw has appeared at nationals each of the last two years. He is a six-time All-American. A physics/mathematics major, he has a 3.83 grade point average. McGraw is a member of the GLIAC All-Academic Team. He has been awarded an internship for this summer with the Department of Energy. McGraw is also a tutor on campus and is active in the Special Olympics and the AU Swim School.