

Northeast Conference

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For Immediate Release

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Northeast Conference Announces 2006 Valley National Bank Spring Scholar-Athlete Award Winners

Somerset, NJ -- Two student-athletes from Mount St. Mary's, Quinnipiac and St. Francis (PA), along with one each from Long Island, Monmouth and Wagner comprise the 2006 Valley National Bank Spring Scholar-Athlete award winners. In addition to the Scholar-Athletes, the NEC also announced its spring academic honor roll, consisting of 384 student-athletes. All Scholar-Athlete award winners must have earned a minimum of 60 semester hours, maintained a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.20 and participated with distinction as a member of a varsity team.

Quinnipiac junior outfielder **Ryan Rizzo (East Northport, NY/Commack)** is the recipient of Valley National Bank Scholar-Athlete accolades in baseball. Rizzo, who was recently named an *ESPN The Magazine* Third Team Academic All-America, was a first team all-NEC performer this past season as the Bobcats finished second in the regular season and qualified for the NEC Tournament for the third year in a row. He led the conference with a .402 average and 74 hits, and also ranked in the top-10 in on-base percentage (.466, fourth), slugging percentage (.533, sixth) and runs scored (43, sixth). The East Northport, NY product also paced the circuit with a .439 average in NEC play, while driving in 16 runs. Rizzo, a three-time Quinnipiac Male Scholar-Athlete, is an Economics major. He sports a 3.84 grade point average.

Saint Francis (PA) sophomore **Steve Foisy (Repentigny, Quebec/Academy Les Estacades)** earns the Valley National Bank Scholar-Athlete award in men's golf. Foisy helped lead the Red Flash to their first-ever conference crown by winning the individual title at the 2006 NEC Championships in May. He fired a 148 (72-76) over the 36-hole tournament to walk away with a two-stroke victory. A two-time NEC Golfer of the Week this past season, Foisy also finished first at the IUP Invitational, third at the Colgate Invitational and fifth at the Mount St. Mary's Fall Classic. The Repentigny, Quebec native's season stroke average of 75.1 ranked second in the NEC. An Accounting major, Foisy maintains a 3.57 grade point average.

Monmouth senior **Rae Johnson (Edgewater, NJ/St. Winifreds (Barbados))** earns Valley National Bank Scholar-Athlete plaudits in women's golf. Johnson took home all-NEC honors for the second straight year following her runner-up finish at the NEC Championships in April. Her two round score of 152 (77-75) tied for third lowest in tournament history as Monmouth placed third at the event. Johnson closed out the year with five top-four finishes to her credit, including second at the Sacred Heart Invitational, third at the Hawk Invitational and Hartford Women's Invitational, and fourth at the William & Mary Tribe Intercollegiate. She led the NEC with a 77.9 stroke average per round and was a four-time NEC Golfer of the Week in 2005-06. Johnson, who hails from Edgewater, NJ, is a Business Finance major and carries a 3.57 grade point average.

Quinnipiac senior defender **Vanessa Miranda (Bay Shore, NY/Bay Shore)** is the women's lacrosse Valley National Bank Scholar-Athlete award winner. Miranda was named the NEC Defensive Player of the Year after anchoring the league's top ranked defensive unit in 2006. Quinnipiac allowed a league-low 9.83 goals per game this past season, due in part to the first team all-NEC performer's efforts. Miranda, now a three-time conference all-star, recorded 18 caused turnovers, 19 ground balls and 10 draw controls during her senior campaign. On March 28, the Bay Shore, NY native became the first defensive player in league history to capture NEC Player of the Week honors and finished her career as the all-time leader at Quinnipiac with 131 caused turnovers. Miranda majors in Finance and maintains a 3.70 grade point average.

(2006 NEC Spring Scholar-Athlete Release; 1-of-2)

Central Connecticut State University • Fairleigh Dickinson University • Long Island University
Monmouth University • Mount St. Mary's University • Quinnipiac University
Robert Morris University • Sacred Heart University • St. Francis (NY) College
St. Francis (PA) University • Wagner College

Wagner senior shortstop **Joy Gallagher (Hazleton, PA/Hazleton)** claims the Valley National Bank Scholar-Athlete award for softball. In only her first season as a member of the softball team, Gallagher's stellar season culminated with her selection as an *ESPN The Magazine* Second Team Academic All-America. In leading the Seahawks to a school-record 35 wins and a berth in the NEC Tournament, Gallagher ranked in the top-10 in the conference in triples (5, first), slugging percentage (.590, fifth), RBI (33, fifth), home runs (7, tenth) and batting average (.333, tenth). She compiled an NEC-high 21-game hitting streak, recorded 14 multi-hit games and was awarded second team all-NEC honors at year's end. A two-sport athlete, Gallagher was chosen as an Academic All-District honoree in women's basketball. The Hazleton, PA native is also a Rhodes Scholar candidate who was recently awarded an NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship. Off the field, Gallagher has served as the Wagner SAAC President the past two years. She is a Chemistry major who sports a 3.88 grade point average.

Mount St. Mary's senior **Jeff Lamberton (Glen Burnie, MD/Mount St. Joseph's)** collects Valley National Bank Scholar-Athlete honors in men's tennis for the second consecutive year. Named to the all-NEC second team at #3 singles in 2005-06, Lamberton played an integral role in the Mount's run to the NEC semifinals, winning his last six matches to close out the season. He finished the year with a 16-13 singles record (6-1 NEC) and was 13-13 in doubles action (4-2 NEC). His 16 singles wins is the eighth-best single season mark in school history, while his 13 doubles victories rank him sixth on the all-time Mount list. Lamberton also stands eighth on the school career charts for singles (40) and doubles (32) triumphs. A first team all-NEC selection at #4 singles in 2004-05, the Glen Burnie, MD product has helped lead Mount St. Mary's to consecutive winning seasons for just the second time since the school elevated to Division I in 1989. Lamberton maintains a 3.55 grade point average as an Accounting major.

Long Island senior **Jessica Loose (Schessel, Germany/Eastern Michigan)** is the recipient of the Valley National Bank Scholar-Athlete award in women's tennis. A transfer from Eastern Michigan University, Loose was tabbed the 2005-06 NEC Player of the Year and earned first team all-conference honors after posting a perfect 6-0 record against NEC competition and a 16-11 overall mark competing at the #1 singles flight. She was one of just three league players to go undefeated in conference play and picked up two NEC Tournament victories. Loose was also recognized as a second team NEC all-star at #1 doubles along with partner Krystina Bachner after the pair combined to go 6-0, including five wins against league rivals. Her arrival on the scene coincided with the Long Island's emergence as an NEC title contender, as the Blackbirds dropped a 4-3 decision to Quinnipiac in a four hour, 50 minute classic in the championship match. Loose, who hails from Schessel, Germany, is a Media Arts major who carries a 3.49 grade point average.

Saint Francis (PA) graduate student **A.J. Suravicz (Ashley, PA/Hanover)** becomes the fifth Red Flash runner in the past six years to take home the Valley National Bank Scholar-Athlete prize in men's outdoor track and field. Competing in his final conference meet, Suravicz won the 1,500 meters (3:57.59) and ran the anchor leg on the Red Flash's first place 4x800 meter relay team (8:04.35) at the 2006 NEC Outdoor Track & Field Championships in May. He also took second in the 800 meters (1:53.02) and fourth as part of the 4x400 meter relay team (3:17.78) to help boost Saint Francis to a second place finish at the event. The Ashley, PA native concluded his career as a five-time individual NEC champion in indoor and outdoor track and field and ran on three first place relay teams. Suravicz, who graduated cum laude in May, 2005 with a degree in Economics and Finance, is currently pursuing a Masters in Business Administration. His grade point average currently stands at 3.54.

After capturing indoor track and field honors earlier in the year, Mount St. Mary's junior **Mandy Jenkins (Wallkill, NY/Valley Central)** claims the Valley National Bank Scholar-Athlete award in women's outdoor track and field. Jenkins established a meet record and captured her second straight NEC outdoor pole vault title in dominating fashion at the NEC Championship meet in May. She cleared 12' 1 1/2", which was nearly one foot better than her next closest competitor, and also qualified her for both the ECAC Championships and NCAA Regionals. Jenkins, who hails for Wallkill, NY, has been the dominant pole vaulter in the conference over the last three years, holding both the indoor and outdoor marks in the event and winning a combined five NEC titles. She was selected as an *ESPN The Magazine* Academic All-District honoree for the second year in a row and is an Academic All-America candidate. With a double major of Biochemistry and Chemistry, Jenkins' grade point average is a near-perfect 3.94.

2006 Valley National Bank Spring Scholar-Athletes

Sport	Name	School	GPA	Major
Baseball	Ryan Rizzo	Quinnipiac	3.84	Economics
Men's Golf	Steve Foisy	Saint Francis (PA)	3.57	Accounting
Women's Golf	Rae Johnson	Monmouth	3.57	Business Finance
Women's Lacrosse	Vanessa Miranda	Quinnipiac	3.70	Finance
Softball	Joy Gallagher	Wagner	3.88	Chemistry
Men's Tennis	Jeff Lamberton	Mount St. Mary's	3.55	Accounting
Women's Tennis	Jessica Loose	Long Island	3.49	Media Arts
Men's Outdoor Track & Field	A.J. Suravicz	Saint Francis (PA)	3.54	Business Administration (Masters)
Women's Outdoor Track & Field	Mandy Jenkins	Mount St. Mary's	3.94	Biochemistry & Chemistry