

Northeast Conference

399 Campus Drive • 1st Floor • Somerset, NJ 08873

(732) 469-0440 • Fax (732) 469-0744 • www.northeastconference.org



For Immediate Release

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Northeast Conference Announces 2011 Fall Scholar-Athletes

Somerset, NJ -- Two student-athletes from Monmouth and Robert Morris, along with one each from Central Connecticut State, Mount St. Mary's and Sacred Heart comprise the 2010 Fall Scholar-Athlete award winners for the Northeast Conference (NEC). Sacred Heart cross country runner **Kimberly DeLoreto (Hillsdale, NJ/Pascack Hills)**, Monmouth women's soccer player **Ali Kliment (Florence, NJ/The Pennington School)** and Robert Morris volleyball player **Amanda Graham (Melbourne, FL/Eau Gallie)** were repeat honorees. The impressive group of award recipients includes four *Capital One* Academic All-Americans and five winners who have posted 3.92 or better grade point averages.

Along with the scholar-athletes, the NEC also announced its fall Academic Honor Roll, consisting of 831 student-athletes, a five percent increase from the fall of 2010. There were also 176 student-athletes named to the Commissioner's Honor Roll, which honors those with a 3.75 or better grade point average. 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.

Central Connecticut State senior **Ry Sanderson (Bantam, CT/The Forman School)** is men's cross country scholar-athlete award winner. Sanderson turned in a dominating performance at the 2010 NEC Cross Country Championships, winning the event in a course record time of 24:50 at Stanley Quarter Park in New Britain, CT. The three-time All-NEC honoree was named the event's Outstanding Performer and helped lead the Blue Devils to their second consecutive team title. Sanderson was named NEC Cross Country Athlete of the Week on October 12 after earning All-New England honors with a fourth place finish at the New England Championships. He also posted a fourth place finish in a field of 162 harriers at the IC4A Championships to wrap up his senior season. Sanderson, who hails from Bantam, CT, is a member of the NEC Academic Honor Roll and carries a 3.41 grade point average. He majors in Physical Education.

Sacred Heart senior **Kimberly DeLoreto (Hillsdale, NJ/Pascack Hills)** claims NEC Scholar-Athlete honors in women's cross country for the second straight year. After winning the 2009 individual crown, DeLoreto crossed the tape in third place at the 2010 NEC Cross Country Championships to claim All-NEC honors for the third time in her career. She clocked in at 17:42.2 for the 5K race held at Stanley Quarter Park in New Britain, CT, and was the first finisher for the Pioneers, who finished third in the team standings. DeLoreto would go on to win the ECAC Championship at Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx, beating out 209 runners with a time of 18:01.6, nearly nine seconds ahead of her nearest competitor. A five-time NEC Athlete of the Week over the course of her career, DeLoreto was honored twice this past season. She was recognized on September 28 after winning the Father Leeber S.J. Invitational and again on October 17 after finishing seventh at the Albany Invitational. DeLoreto is the first Sacred Heart runner to earn All-New England, All-NEC and All-East honors three times in her career and was the 2007 NEC Freshman of the Year. The Hillsdale, NJ native is a Psychology major. She maintains a 3.92 grade point average.

Monmouth senior midfielder **Morganne Firmstone (Honesdale, PA/Honesdale)** is the recipient of the NEC Scholar-Athlete award in field hockey. Firmstone was tabbed to the All-NEC first team last fall after she registered career-highs in goals (six), assists (six) and points (18). She scored three game-winning goals, one of which was an overtime tally that gave the Hawks their first-ever win over Villanova and earned her NEC Player of the Week plaudits on August 30. Firmstone also played a role in Monmouth's postseason success, recording an assist in a 4-1 semifinal win over Bryant that sent the Hawks to their second straight NEC title game. The Honesdale, PA product majors in Communications and sports a 3.96 grade point average.

(2010 Northeast Conference Fall Scholar-Athlete Release; 1-of-2)

Bryant University (2012-13) • 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
Saint Francis (PA) University • Wagner College

Robert Morris sophomore defensive lineman **Nolan Nearhoof (Gibsonia, PA/Mars Area)** collects NEC Scholar-Athlete honors in football. In a landmark season for the program, Nearhoof helped lead the Colonials to a share of the NEC championship and the league's inaugural berth in the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) playoffs. An All-NEC first team pick, he spearheaded a Robert Morris defense that ranked first in the league in scoring defense (20.5 ppg), rushing defense (113.8 ypg) and total defense (312.6 ypg). Nearhoof finished the year with 49 tackles, including 14 solo stops, and led the Colonials with 5.5 sacks and nine quarterback hurries. At year's end he became the third student-athlete from the football program and fourth overall at Robert Morris to earn *Capital One* Academic All-America honors, garnering second team recognition. Nearhoof, a Gibsonia, PA native, majors in Biology and has registered a 3.97 grade point average.

Mount St. Mary's senior midfielder **Eric Detzel (York, PA/Central York)** is the NEC Scholar-Athlete honoree in men's soccer. Detzel was tabbed to the *Capital One* Academic All-America first team this past fall following a stellar 2010 campaign. He was named a first team All-NEC performer after earning second team accolades as a junior. Detzel finished the season as the league leader in assists (eight) and assists per game (.44), while also ranking seventh in points (14) and tenth in points per game (0.78). Similarly, he ranked 30th in the nation in assists per game and 31st in total assists. Detzel, who hails from York, PA, was instrumental in four Mount victories in the month of October after he scored the game-winning goal against Central Connecticut State and dished out assists on game-winners against Fairleigh Dickinson, Bryant and Robert Morris. He also scored a goal and added two assists in a span of 3:05 to lift the Mountaineers to a 4-3 win over George Washington in September. Detzel finished his career with 17 goals, 17 assists and 51 points. He ranks sixth in program history in assists, sixth in Mount's Division I history in points and seventh in goals. Detzel carries a 3.87 grade point average and majors in Mathematics/Computer Science.

Monmouth senior defender **Ali Kliment (Florence, NJ/The Pennington School)** earns her second consecutive NEC Scholar-Athlete award in women's soccer. The honors rolled in for Kliment this past season, culminating with her selection to the *Capital One* Academic All-America third team and *NSCAA* Women's Scholar All-America third team. For her performance on the field, she was named to the All-NEC first team for the second year in a row. The team captain scored twice as a senior, and anchored a defense that posted seven shutouts and ranked second in the conference in goals allowed. Kliment led a suffocating defensive effort in early season victories over then-#17 Rutgers and defending America East champion Boston University, which earned Monmouth its first-ever national ranking. The Florence, NJ native started all 66 games for the Hawks during her career and was the 2009 NEC Defensive Player of the Year. Kliment, a 2010 *Lowe's* Senior Class Award candidate, majors in Political Science and has posted a near-perfect 3.99 grade point average.

Robert Morris senior middle blocker **Amanda Graham (Melbourne, FL/Eau Gallie)** repeats as the NEC Scholar-Athlete award winner in women's volleyball. Graham is just the second player in Robert Morris history to earn All-NEC honors in each of her four years with the program. She was named to the All-Conference first team for the third time in her career this past fall after leading the Colonials to a second place regular season finish and a berth in the NEC title match. Graham ranked second in the league in blocks per game (1.17) and third in hitting percentage (.329). She established a new single-season program record for block assists with 125, and her 151 total blocks was the second-highest total in school history. Graham earned two of her four career *Molten*/NEC Player of the Week selections this past season and leaves Robert Morris as the school record holder for block assists (358), while ranking second in attack percentage (.331) and total blocks (438), and fifth in kills (1,107) and service aces (131). She became the first female student-athlete in school history to be named a *Capital One* Academic All-American, earning second team accolades this past fall. Likewise, she holds the distinction of being the only Robert Morris student-athlete to claim a spot on CoSIDA Academic All-District teams three times over the course of her career. Graham, who hails from Melbourne, FL, is a 3.98 student who is majoring in Nuclear Medicine Technology.

2011 Northeast Conference Fall Scholar-Athletes

Sport	Name	School	Cl	GPA	Major
Men's Cross Country	Ry Sanderson	Central Connecticut State	Sr	3.41	Physical Education
Women's Cross Country	Kimberly DeLoreto	Sacred Heart	Sr	3.92	Psychology
Field Hockey	Morganne Firmstone	Monmouth	Sr	3.96	Communications
Football	Nolan Nearhoof	Robert Morris	So	3.97	Biology
Men's Soccer	Eric Detzel	Mount St. Mary's	Sr	3.87	Mathematics/Computer Science
Women's Soccer	Ali Kliment	Monmouth	Sr	3.99	Political Science
Women's Volleyball	Amanda Graham	Robert Morris	Sr	3.98	Nuclear Medicine Technology