

Northeast Conference

200 Cottontail Lane • Vantage Court North • Somerset, NJ 08873
(732) 469-0440 • Fax (732) 469-0744 • www.northeastconference.org



For Immediate Release
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Northeast Conference Announces Postseason Softball Awards

LIU's Randi Gillespie Chosen NEC Player of the Year;
LIU's Jenny Giles Selected NEC Pitcher of the Year;
Wagner's Andrea Lazzari Tabbed NEC Rookie of the Year;
Mount St. Mary's Larry Alvis Named NEC Coach of the Year

Somerset, NJ — After posting a league record of 17-3 and capturing a share of the 2006 NEC softball regular season crown, Long Island nabbed two of the four major NEC postseason softball awards, which were announced at the NEC Tournament banquet on Thursday evening. Blackbird junior **Randi Gillespie (San Jose, CA/West Valley CC)** was named the NEC Player of the Year, while teammate **Jenny Giles (Melbourne, FL/Eau Gallie)** was selected the NEC Pitcher of the Year. Wagner first baseman **Andrea Lazzari (Reno, NV/Wooster)** was tabbed the NEC Rookie of the Year and Mount St. Mary's head coach **Larry Alvis** was awarded NEC Coach of the Year.

Gillespie, who also garners first team accolades in the utility spot, posted a team-high .364 batting average and leads the league in slugging percentage (.656) and home runs (11). The junior also ranks among the NEC leaders in several other categories, including second in total bases (101) and walks (26), third in RBI (42), fourth in on-base percentage (.454) and fifth in hits (56). In conference play, Gillespie is slugging a league second-best .881 with 23 RBI and seven home runs, while posting a .441 batting average. The California native is now a two-time all-NEC first team selection.

Giles was selected the NEC Pitcher of the Year after posting a 9-3 mark with four shutouts and a 1.66 ERA in conference play. In 71.2 innings of work, the rookie hurler allowed only 17 earned runs and six walks, while fanning 61 batters and limiting her opponents to a .263 batting average. Overall, Giles is 20-15 with a 2.68 ERA, 148 strikeouts and seven shutouts. A three-time Pitcher of the Week selection this season, Giles also earned first team accolades and becomes only the second freshman in NEC history to win Pitcher of the Year honors.

Lazzari was selected NEC Rookie of the Year after batting .335 with 55 hits, 28 runs scored, 28 RBI, 11 doubles and four home runs. In conference play, Lazzari is hitting .446, which is fifth in the league, with a second-best 29 hits, 14 RBI and a .723 slugging percentage. Also a solid first baseman, Lazzari committed just two errors for a sparkling .994 fielding percentage. The three-time NEC Rookie of the Week selection also garners first team accolades at first base. Lazzari becomes only the second player in Wagner school history to earn a major postseason award in softball. Teammate Katie Stevens was named the 2005 NEC Rookie of the Year.

Alvis, in just his second season as head coach, guided the Mount to a complete turnaround from a season ago with a 31-23 overall record and a 14-6 conference mark. Under Alvis' direction, the Mount nearly tripled its win total from 2005, going from 12 wins to

(1-of-4) — All-NEC Softball Postseason Awards

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

31. The 31 overall wins and 14 league wins are the most in school history. Led by Alvis, the Mountaineers are making just their eighth appearance in the NEC tournament this weekend and first since the 1998 season.

Long Island and Robert Morris each have three first team honorees. Joining Gillespie and Giles is LIU sophomore designated player **Vanessa Mejia (Roanoke, VA/Los Angeles Valley College)**. A first time all-NEC honoree, Mejia batted .310 with 48 hits, 26 runs scored, 14 doubles, five home runs, 25 RBI and a .510 slugging percentage. In league play, Mejia posted a .403 batting average with seven doubles, 11 RBI and a .694 slugging percentage.

Robert Morris' trio of first teamers includes junior catcher **Jill Dorsch (Sewickley, PA/North Allegheny)**, senior third baseman **Kali Byers (Alum Bank, PA/Chestnut Ridge)** and junior shortstop **Jill Spargo (Warren, PA/Warren Area)**. Dorsch, who captures her first all-conference nod, is leading the league in on-base percentage (.481) and is second in batting average (.400). In conference play, Dorsch is batting .491, which is tops in the NEC, with a .557 on-base percentage, which is good enough for second in the league. On the defensive side, Dorsch has a .994 fielding percentage while nailing ten would-be base stealers. Now a four-time NEC all-star, Byers is batting .307 with eight home runs, 24 RBI and a .561 slugging percentage. In league play, she is hitting .345 with 20 hits, a .500 slugging percentage and a .465 on-base percentage. Spargo garners her second straight all-NEC selection by batting .372 with 58 hits, which stands fourth in the league and posting 19 multi-hit games. In conference play, Spargo is hitting .462 with a league-high 36 hits. The speedy Spargo has swiped 13 bases in 17 attempts this season.

Monmouth's two first team selections are freshmen, including second baseman **Lee Simonetti (Poughkeepsie, NY/Our Lady of Lourdes)** and outfielder **Nichole Alvarez (Brick, NJ/Brick Township)**. Simonetti posted a .348 batting average in league play with 11 runs scored and five doubles with a .522 slugging percentage. From the middle infield spot, Simonetti committed just three errors in league play. Alvarez had a breakout year for the Hawks in her rookie campaign ranking among the top-ten in the NEC in several different categories, including batting average (.374), slugging percentage (.551), hits (55), triples (4), total bases (81) and stolen bases (17). Alvarez proved even better in conference play, leading the Hawks at the plate with a .441 average and .729 slugging percentage. Her biggest weapon was her speed as she swiped 17 bases in as many attempts.

Joining Lazzari on the first team is Wagner hurler **Morgan Miller (Las Vegas, NV/Silverado)**. In her three seasons as a Seahawk, Miller is a three-time all-NEC first team honoree. The Las Vegas native leads the NEC with a 1.79 ERA and is second with 18 wins. Miller has fanned 83 batters in 168.1 innings of work, while limiting opponents to a .264 batting average. In NEC action, Miller sports an 8-1 mark with a 1.27 ERA, while surrendering just 12 earned runs in 66 innings pitched.

Rounding out the first team are a pair of senior outfielders, including Central Connecticut State's **Kristin Kropp (Franklin, CT/Norwich Free Academy)** and Mount St. Mary's **Danyale Goode (Ellicott City, MD/Seton Keough)**. Now a three-time all-NEC selection, Kropp leads the league with a .401 batting average and ranks among the top-ten in several other categories, including on base percentage (.437), hits (63) and triples (4). Kropp posted an NEC-high 20 multi-hit games and ended the season on a 20-game hitting streak. Goode, who was a second team selection at catcher in 2003, rewrote the offensive record books at the Mount this season. The slugging right fielder leads the Mount in nearly every offensive category and ranks among the league leaders in batting average (.371), runs scored (39), hits (66), home runs (10), RBI (44), total bases (107), slugging percentage (.601) and on-base percentage (.427). Goode also posted a league-high 20 multi-hit games this season.

Wagner placed an NEC-high five players on the second team, including sophomore catcher **Victoria Batistelli (Huntington Beach, CA/Huntington Beach)**. Batistelli boosted her batting average by 60 points in her second season from .276 in 2005 to .336 in 2006. She also nearly doubled the rest of her 2005 offensive statistics, including a league-best 45 RBI and 11 home runs. The California product was among the top-ten in the NEC in runs scored (41) and slugging percentage (.651). Batistelli proved even better in NEC action, leading the Seahawks with a .450 batting average, seven home runs and 25 RBI. On the defensive side, Batistelli gunned down 13 would-be base stealers. She is joined by senior shortstop **Joy Gallagher (Hazleton, PA/Hazleton)** and freshman designated player **Jaclyn Vanore (Palisades Park, NJ/Paramus Catholic)**. Gallagher, in her first season as a member of the softball team,

made her way onto the second team by ranking among the league leaders in batting average (.346), slugging percentage (.618), RBI (33), triples (5) and total bases (84). The Hazelton, PA product also posted an NEC-best 21-game hit streak this season. In just her first season, Vanore was one of seven Seahawk players to bat over .300, posting a .310 average. The rookie also tallied 20 RBI and a .407 on base percentage.

Rounding out the Seahawks all-NEC second team selections are a pair of outfielders, sophomore **Ami Iwicki (Flemington, NJ/Hunterdon Central)** and junior **Christina Hopkins (Edison, NJ/Edison)**. Iwicki worked her way onto the all-conference squad by batting a team-best .348 and registering 11 doubles and 27 RBI. In conference play, Iwicki posted a .383 batting average and a .420 on-base percentage. Hopkins makes her way onto the all-NEC second team for the second straight season. The Edison, NJ native batted .344 with 34 runs scored and 12 doubles, while also posting a .333 batting average in league action.

Regular season co-champion Robert Morris placed three players on the all-NEC second team, including the 2005 NEC Pitcher of the Year **Danielle Cohen (Marlton, NJ/Cherokee)**, 2005 NEC Player of the Year **Keri Meyer (Carnegie, PA/Canevin Catholic)** and junior first baseman **Ashlee Smith (Mechanicsville, VA/Lee-Davis)**. Cohen, a junior, posted a 10-2 mark with a 1.67 ERA and struck out a league-best 69 batters in conference play. Overall, the lefty was 12-6 with a 2.93 ERA and 101 strikeouts in 102.2 innings of work. Meyer, a two-time all-NEC selection at second base, collects all-conference accolades in the utility slot this season. The senior batted .331 with 26 runs scored, six home runs and 24 RBI, while hitting .343 and slugging .612 in league play. Smith, a junior, garners her first all-NEC selection after driving in a team-high 33 runs and drilling a team-high nine home runs. The Mechanicsville, VA product hit .354 with 19 RBI and a .554 slugging percentage in conference play.

Long Island is represented on the all-NEC second team by the 2004 NEC Pitcher of the Year **Jessica Busick (Milpitas, CA/West Valley CC)**. After missing the 2005 season due to a shoulder injury, Busick rebounded by notching a perfect 7-0 mark with a 1.15 ERA in NEC action. The senior from California was 10-5 overall with a 2.71 ERA in 98.1 innings of work, while limiting her opponents to a .266 batting average.

Mount St. Mary's freshman third baseman **Kelli Seger (Huntingtown, MD/Huntingtown)** helped lead the Mount to its first postseason bid since the 1998 season by batting .323 with nine doubles and 20 RBI. In league play, the rookie hit .348 with a .435 slugging percentage.

Quinnipiac sophomore **Jill Viglione (Blue Bell, PA/Wissahickon)** earns her way onto the all-NEC second team at second base. Viglione raised her batting average by nearly 120 points from her rookie campaign, from .167 in 2005 to .285 this season. The Blue Bell, PA product also batted .367 with 22 hits and four stolen bases in league play.

Monmouth's junior **Heather Gordon (Hatboro, PA/Mount St. Joseph's)** collects second team honors in the outfield after garnering first team accolades in the utility spot in each of her first two seasons. Gordon posted a .326 batting average, while ranking among the league's leaders in slugging percentage (.631), RBI (36), home runs (10) and total bases (89). In NEC action, Gordon batted .361 with six home runs, 20 RBI and a .738 slugging percentage.

The double-elimination 2006 Northeast Conference Softball Tournament will get underway on Friday, May 12 with the opening round game featuring #1 Long Island against #4 Mount St. Mary's at 10:00 am, followed by #2 Robert Morris against #3 Wagner at 12:30 pm. The championship game is scheduled for 12:30 pm on Saturday, May 13. The tournament is being hosted by LIU and is being held on the campus of Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck, NJ. For game recaps and box scores, log onto the NEC official website at www.northeastconference.org.

2006 NEC Softball Major Award Winners

Player of the Year

Randi Gillespie	Long Island	UT	Jr.	San Jose, CA/West Valley CC
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Pitcher of the Year

Jenny Giles	Long Island	P	Fr.	Melbourne, FL/Eau Gallie
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Rookie of the Year

Andrea Lazzari	Wagner	1B	Fr.	Reno, NV/Wooster
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Coach of the Year

Larry Alvis	Mount St. Mary's
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2006 NEC Softball First Team All-Conference

Name	School	Pos	Yr	Hometown/Previous School
Jill Dorsch	Robert Morris	C	Jr.	Sewickley, PA/North Allegheny
Andrea Lazzari	Wagner	1B	Fr.	Reno, NV/Wooster
Lee Simonetti	Monmouth	2B	Fr.	Poughkeepsie, NY/Our Lady of Lourdes
Kali Byers	Robert Morris	3B	Sr.	Alum Bank, PA/Chestnut Ridge
Jill Spargo	Robert Morris	SS	Jr.	Warren, PA/Warren Area
Nichole Alvarez	Monmouth	OF	Fr.	Brick, NJ/Brick Township
Danyale Goode	Mount St. Mary's	OF	Sr.	Ellicott City, MD/Seton Keough
Kristin Kropp	Central Conn. St.	OF	Sr.	Franklin, CT/Norwich Free Academy
Vanessa Mejia	Long Island	DP	So.	Roanoke, VA/Los Angeles Valley College
Randi Gillespie	Long Island	UT	Jr.	San Jose, CA/West Valley CC
Jenny Giles	Long Island	P	Fr.	Melbourne, FL/Eau Gallie
Morgan Miller	Wagner	P	Jr.	Las Vegas, NV/Silverado

2006 NEC Softball Second Team All-Conference

Name	School	Pos	Yr	Hometown/Previous School
Victoria Batistelli	Wagner	C	So.	Huntington Beach, CA/Huntington Beach
Ashlee Smith	Robert Morris	1B	Jr.	Mechanicsville, VA/Lee-Davis
Jill Viglione	Quinnipiac	2B	So.	Blue Bell, PA/Wissahickon
Kelli Seger	Mount St. Mary's	3B	Fr.	Huntingtown, MD/Huntingtown
Joy Gallagher	Wagner	SS	Sr.	Hazleton, PA/Hazleton
Heather Gordon	Monmouth	OF	Jr.	Hatboro, PA/Mount St. Joseph's
Christina Hopkins	Wagner	OF	Jr.	Edison, NJ/Edison
Ami Iwicki	Wagner	OF	So.	Flemington, NJ/Hunterdon Central
Jaclyn Vanore	Wagner	DP	Fr.	Palisades Park, NJ/Paramus Catholic
Keri Meyer	Robert Morris	UT	Sr.	Carnegie, PA/Canevin Catholic
Jessica Busick	Long Island	P	Sr.	Milpitas, CA/West Valley CC
Danielle Cohen	Robert Morris	P	Jr.	Marlton, NJ/Cherokee