



PRESS RELEASE

WBCA Honors 2005–2006 Academic Top 25 Recipients

ATLANTA, Ga. (July 17, 2006) -- The Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) announced its 2005–2006 Academic Top 25 Team Honor Roll for NCAA Division I, NCAA Division II, NCAA Division III, NAIA and Junior College/Community College. The awards recognize teams throughout the nation that have the highest grade point averages (GPA) for the 2005–2006 season based upon nominations submitted by WBCA–member coaches.

"It is my pleasure to recognize each of these distinguished women's basketball programs that have gone above and beyond excellence on the court, and have extended it to the classroom," said WBCA Chief Executive Officer Beth Bass. "These 118 teams admirably strive to be successful all-around and we commend their efforts. Congratulations!"

Division	Institution	2005–06 Head Coach	GPA	Top 25 Range
NCAA I	South Dakota State University	Aaron Johnston	3.730	3.730–3.298
NCAA II	University of Nebraska – Kearney	Carol Russell	3.663	3.663–3.297
NCAA III	Colorado College	Kelly Mahlum	3.577	3.577–3.331
NAIA	Davenport University	Mark Youngs	3.613	3.613–2.991*
NAIA	Dana College	Brenda Mechels	3.585	3.613–2.991
JC/CC	Colby Community College	Tom Stephens	3.458	3.458–2.675**

* =top 26 range

* * =top 17 range

Each of the top ranking institutions have appeared on the WBCA Academic Top 25 Honor Roll as least once in the past six years. The University of Nebraska – Kearney returns to the number one spot for the second time, with the first time in 2003. South Dakota State University finished in a close second last year and has taken the number one seed for the first time. Also finishing at the top spot for the first time are Colorado College, Dana College and Colby Community College. These "classy" teams combine for an average 3.604 GPA for the 2005–2006 season.

GPA's are calculated by dividing the total number of quality points earned by each student-athlete on an institution's roster in the given academic terms by the total number of hours earned by the team. The GPA's are rounded to the nearest

thousandth of a point.

NCAA Division I

In his second season at the NCAA Division I level, South Dakota State's Aaron Johnston has already taken over the ranks to top this year's Academic Top 25. After finishing second in 2005, Johnston's team took it one step further to become the number one academic team in the nation not only for NCAA Division I, but they also carried the highest GPA at all levels. The Lady Jacks squad's success in the classroom carried over to the court, as they finished the season with 19 wins and an overall record of 19–9.

"We had a really dedicated team committed to doing both academics and athletics. Being in the top 15 of the WBCA Academic Top 25 is always a goal of ours," Johnston said. "Last year we finished second, so it was a goal to try to improve upon that. The team did a great job!"

The WBCA Academic Top 25 Team Honor Roll for NCAA Division I is as follows:

	School	2005–2006 Head Coach	Team GPA
1.	South Dakota State	Aaron Johnston	3.730
2.	Indiana State University	Jim Wiedie	3.612
3.	Eastern Washington University	Wendy Schuller	3.474
4.	Valparaiso University	Keith Freeman	3.468
5.	Montana State – Bozeman	Tricia Binford	3.459
6.	University of New Mexico	Don Flanagan	3.424
7.	Oakland University	Beckie Francis	3.402
8.	University of Northern Iowa	Tony DiCecco	3.399
9.	Northern Arizona University	Laurie Kelly	3.364
10.	Univ. of Wisconsin – Green Bay	Kevin Borseth	3.362
11.	DePaul University	Doug Bruno	3.361
12.	Canisius College	Terrence Zeh	3.344
13.	University of Denver	Pamela Tanner	3.343
T14.	Lehigh University	Susan Troyan	3.338
T14.	Liberty University	Carey Green	3.338
16.	University of Central Florida	Gail Striegler	3.335
17.	Texas A&M – Corpus Christi	Robert Robinson	3.330
18.	Dartmouth College	Christina Wielgus	3.323
19.	University of Oklahoma	Sherri Coale	3.315
20.	Saint Bonaventure University	Jim Crowley	3.307
21.	Long Island University	Stephanie Gaitley	3.301
22.	Villanova University	Harry Perretta	3.300
23.	University of Florida	Carolyn Peck	3.299
T24.	Bradley University	Paula Buscher	3.298

NCAA Division II

The University of Nebraska – Kearney women's basketball team ranks in the top 10 for the fourth consecutive year, accepting first place for the second time. Head coach Carol Russell is making the yearly appearances in the WBCA Academic Top 25 Team Honor Roll a tradition for the Lady Lopers. The squad put up impressive numbers in the classroom and on the court, finishing the season 21–8.

"I think it is a testament to the types of kids that we have in our program. They dedicated themselves to really being involved as a student as well as the athlete," Russell said. "I think that is the epitome of the student–athlete on our campus, and I am really proud of their efforts and how hard they have worked."

The WBCA Academic Top 25 Team Honor Roll for NCAA Division II is as follows:

	School	2005–2006 Head Coach	Team GPA
1.	University of Nebraska – Kearney	Carol Russell	3.663
2.	Drury University	Nyla Milleson	3.626
3.	Pittsburg State University	Steve High	3.568
4.	Augustana College	Dave Krauth	3.550
5.	Northern Kentucky University	Nancy Winstel	3.524
6.	Pace University	Carrie Seymour	3.522
7.	Colorado Christian University	Kristen Buckley	3.516
8.	Lewis University	Lynn Plett	3.515
9.	Abilene Christian University	Shawna Lavendar	3.495
10.	Quincy University	Larry Just	3.462
11.	Concordia University	Paul Fessler	3.460
12.	Minnesota State University	Karla Nelson	3.457
13.	Palm Beach Atlantic College	Brent Gibson	3.440
14.	North Georgia College & St. Univ.	Buffie Burson	3.435
15.	Indiana University of Pennsylvania	Cindy Martin	3.422
16.	Slippery Rock University	Laurel Heilman	3.407
17.	University of Nebraska	Patricia Shearer	3.372
18.	Regis University	Linda Raunig	3.371
19.	Upper Iowa University	Benjamin Conrad	3.364
20.	Ferris State University	Tracey Bloodworth–Fisk	3.350
21.	Gannon University	Cleve Wright	3.343
22.	Mars Hill College	Mandy Mattox	3.340

23.	Univ. of Minnesota – Crookston	Sheila Roux	3.327
24.	Truman State University	John Sloop	3.324
25.	Valdosta State University	Kiley Hill	3.297

NCAA Division III

Finishing in the top five last year, Colorado College's head coach, Kelly Mahlum, would not settle for less than taking over the top spot on this year's WBCA Academic Top 25. In only their second appearance in the top 25, the Lady Tigers have already proven what it takes to be number one, even with a fairly young team. On the court, this young team finished a commendable 15–10 for the season.

The WBCA Academic Top 25 Team Honor Roll for NCAA Division III is as follows:

	School	2005–2006 Head Coach	Team GPA
1.	Colorado College	Kelly Mahlum	3.577
T2.	Millikin University	Lori Kerans	3.560
T2.	York College	Betsy Witman	3.560
4.	Maryville University – St. Louis	Chris Ellis	3.532
5.	Yeshiva University	Karen Green	3.527
6.	University of Redlands	Jim Ducey	3.525
7.	Simpson College	Brian Niemuth	3.501
8	Greenville College	Roy Mulholland	3.471
T9.	Calvin College	John Ross	3.467
T9.	Muhlenberg College	Ron Rohn	3.467
11.	Whitman College	Michelle Ferenz	3.460
12.	Chatham College	Mark Katarski	3.435
13.	Emory University	Christy Thomaskutty	3.427
14.	North Central College	Emily Bauer	3.417
15.	Hartwick College	Daphne Thompson	3.412
16.	Wartburg College	Bob Amsberry	3.410
17.	Susquehanna University	James Reed	3.408
18.	Kenyon College	Suzanne Helfant	3.386
19.	Southwestern University	Pamela Ruder	3.376
20.	Luther College	Jane Hildebrand	3.374
21.	University of Puget Sound	Suzy Barcomb	3.361
22.	King's College	Brian Donoghue	3.348
23.	Hamline University	Melissa Young–Kruse	3.344
24.	Gustavus Adolphus College	Mickey Haller	3.342
25.	Emerson – Mass. College of Art	Melissa Hart	3.331

NAIA

Due to an appeal from Davenport University the results of the NAIA WBCA Academic Top 25 have changed. The WBCA Board of Directors decided that due to a computer error on the WBCA's end, Davenport University and Dana College will share the top honor this year for NAIA Academic Top 25. The WBCA apologizes for this error and would like to recognize both schools and the achievements they have made in the classroom.

There are no limits to what the women's basketball team at Davenport University could accomplish this past year. The team finished the year with an astounding record of 29–5. Next year's roster is comprised of a very young group, but look for these student-athletes to continue their winning tradition both on and off the court.

The women's basketball team at Dana College has been hitting the books hard for three straight years and finally they top the charts as number one for the 2005–2006 WBCA Academic Top 25 Honor Roll. Posting ranks as 22nd last season and fifth in 2003–2004, Lady Vikings' head coach Brenda Mechels has pushed her team to realize the importance of balancing both academics and athletics.

The WBCA Academic Top 25 Team Honor Roll for NAIA is as follows:

School	2005–2006 Head Coach	Team GPA
T1. Davenport University	Mark Youngs	3.613
T1. Dana College	Brenda Mechels	3.585
2. Westminster College	JD Gustin	3.577
3. Indiana Wesleyan University	Steve Brooks	3.554
4. Briar Cliff University	Pam Gohl	3.552
5. Huntington University	Lori Culler	3.532
6. The Master's College	Ken Sugarman	3.526
7. Mount Marty College	Chuck Iverson	3.525
8. Concordia University – Nebraska	Todd Voss	3.516
9. University of Montana – Western	Kevin Engellant	3.507
10. Freed–Hardeman University	Dale Neal	3.501
11. Hannibal–La Grange College	Tiffany Hill	3.496
12. Georgetown College	Susan Johnson	3.452
13. Campbellsville University	Donna Wise	3.450
14. Northwestern College	Earl Woudstra	3.440
15. Oklahoma Christian University	Stephanie Findley	3.400
16. Olivet Nazarene University	Doug Porter	3.391
17. University of Rio Grande	David Smalley	3.388
18. Doane College	Tracee Fairbanks	3.376
19. Carlow University	John Brown	3.292
20. College of the Ozarks	George Wilson	3.291

21. Lee University	Marty Rowe	3.271
22. Tiffin University	Shannon Potee	3.250
23. Cornerstone University	Carla Fles	3.141
24. Midway College	Timothy Southers	3.014
25. Bethel College (Kansas)	Mark Fox	2.991

Junior College/Community College

Colby Community College not only appears for the first time on the WBCA Academic Top 25 Team Honor Roll since 2002, but they take the number one seed. Head coach Tom Stephens takes home the top ranking for the first time and hopes to start a trend with the success. Outside of the classroom, the Lady Trojans won the 2006 Region VI Championship and finished the season with an outstanding overall record of 32-5.

"It was our first year to go to the national tournament and the kids were really focused and had good habits on and off the floor," Stephens said.

The WBCA Academic Top 17* Team Honor Roll for JC/CC is as follows:

School	2005-2006 Head Coach	Team GPA
1. Colby Community College	Tom Stephens	3.458
2. Lackawanna Junior College	Staci Hughes	3.352
3. Umpqua Community College	David Stricklin	3.327
4. John Wood Community College	Norman Rodriguez	3.295
5. Lincoln College	Carol Wilson	3.289
6. Columbia Basin Community College	Cheryl Holden	3.275
7. Minnesota West Comm. & Tech. Coll.	Michael Fury	3.265
8. Neosho County Community College	Diana Couch	3.204
9. Gulf Coast Community College	Mary Scovel	3.111
10. Northeastern Junior College	Wendy Hirschfeld	3.040
11. Illinois Central College	Steve Garber	3.037
12. Lincoln Trail College	Denise Young	3.032
13. North Arkansas College	Rusty Kennedy	2.997
14. Kirkwood Community College	Kim Muhl	2.946
15. Southwestern Christian	Ski Wyrick	2.840
16. Ventura College	Ned Mircetic	2.744
17. Danville Area Community College	Lyle Hicks	2.675

* = Due to the limited number of nominations for junior college and community colleges, the WBCA has ranked the Top 17 schools.

