



PRESS RELEASE

Anna Atkinson and Christina Wirth Receive WBCA Scholarship Awards

ATLANTA, Ga. (March 5, 2009) -- The Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) has selected Wingate's Anna Atkinson and Vanderbilt's Christina Wirth as the 2009 WBCA Scholarship Award winners.

These awards are presented annually to two women's basketball players in any of the five WBCA collegiate divisions (NCAA Division I, II, III, NAIA and Junior College/Community College) who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to the sport of women's basketball and to academic excellence. The scholarships enable deserving student-athletes to complete their undergraduate degrees or to begin work on advanced degrees. Each award is in the amount of \$1,000.

"The WBCA is pleased to recognize those who excel both on and off the court and this year's scholarship recipients have done just that," WBCA CEO Beth Bass said. "Anna Atkinson and Christina Wirth have dedicated their time not only to basketball, but to academics and their exceptional efforts are worthy of being rewarded. You both have bright futures ahead of you."

Atkinson is a four-year starting point guard who currently ranks first in the SAC in assists per game (6.7), steals per game (3.5) and assist-to-turnover ratio (3.4). Her past honors include 2006 SAC Freshman of the Year, All-SAC second team in 2007, All-SAC first team and SAC Athlete of the Year in 2008.

Atkinson is ranked first in the Division II national rankings in assist-to turnover ratio and fourth in assists per game. She has led her team to two regular season championships and three NCAA tournament appearances.

In addition to excelling on the court, Atkinson is currently majoring in Biology with pre-dental specialization and has achieved a 4.0 grade point average. She was voted to the *ESPN The Magazine's* Academic All-District first team for the past three years and the First Team Academic All-America in 2008.

Atkinson has spent seven semesters on the Wingate University's President's List, was named Freshman Chemist of the Year in 2006 and the NCAA Division II CCA and South Atlantic Region female Scholar-Athlete of the Year in 2008.

When not on the court or in the classroom, Atkinson can be found volunteering for Habitat for Humanity, helping to build homes for local residents. She is also a Union County School System volunteer, where she spends time during the week as a reading

mentor. In addition, she heads many Wingate women's basketball fundraising projects.

Vanderbilt senior guard Wirth is a finalist for Lowe's Senior CLASS Award, a candidate for the Wooden Award and on The State Farm Wade Trophy watch list. The team captain is the 13th all-time leading scorer and fourth player in the school's history to record 200 three-pointers. Wirth is averaging 15 points per game, has more than 61 assists, 43 steals and 150 rebounds this season. She currently has a career 41.8 three-point percentage and ranks fifth on Vanderbilt's all-time free throw list with a 79.5 percentage.

Wirth has been honored five times on Vanderbilt's Dean List and currently has a 3.6 grade point average. A three-time SEC Honor Roll pick, Wirth is a human and organizational development major who is already taking graduate classes towards a Master's Degree in nursing. She was also recently named to the *ESPN The Magazine* Academic All-American Third Team, was a unanimous First-Team All SEC selection and was named SEC Scholar-Athlete of the Year.

Outside of school and basketball, Wirth serves as the Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) representative for women's basketball and as a part of Vanderbilt's Fellowship of Christian Athlete's leadership team. The Mesa, Az., native is also a member of the 2009 SEC Community Service Team.

Atkinson and Wirth will be formally presented their awards during the WBCA Awards Luncheon *presented by State Farm and Jostens* on Tuesday, April 7, at Noon (CT) in the Hyatt Regency St. Louis Riverfront Grand Ballroom. The awards luncheon is part of the 2009 WBCA National Convention and is held in conjunction with the NCAA® Women's Final Four® in St. Louis, Mo.