



PRESS RELEASE

WBCA Recognizes Success in the Classroom with Academic Top 25

ATLANTA, Ga. (July 8, 2009) -- The Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) announced its winners for the 2008-09 Academic Top 25 Team Honor Roll. This award, given in NCAA Division I, NCAA Division II, NCAA Division III, NAIA and Junior College/Community College, awards teams throughout the nation that carry the highest grade point averages (GPA) for the entire season based on the nomination submitted by WBCA-member head coaches.

"It is always an honor for the WBCA to recognize these teams for putting together outstanding cumulative grade point averages," WBCA CEO Beth Bass said. "We want to congratulate each and every one of these teams for their efforts in the classroom and want them to know that we celebrate their hard work. My thanks go out to these teams for setting a benchmark of success academically among their peers in the sport."

Division	Institution	2008-09 Head Coach	GPA	Top 25 Range
NCAA I	Indiana State University	Jim Wiedie	3.645	3.645-3.308
NCAA II	St. Thomas Aquinas College	Kim Lusk	3.694	3.694-3.371
NCAA III	Maryville University of St. Louis	Chris Ellis	3.625	3.625-3.364
NAIA	Dana College	Shane Larson	3.763	3.763-3.228
JC/CC	Phoenix College	Samantha Ezell	3.378	3.378-3.020*

* top 20 range

Four of the five institutions at the top spot for their division have received distinction on the WBCA Academic Top 25 Honor Roll before. Indiana State claimed the top spot in NCAA Division I for the third time and is making its eighth consecutive appearance in the top 25. In Division II, St. Thomas Aquinas is making its first-ever top 25, while Maryville University of St. Louis (Division III) has appeared four times prior. Dana College is claiming its third No. 1 ranking, while Phoenix College earns its first top position.

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. Per a motion passed by the WBCA Board of Directors in 2007, teams making the list of Academic Top 25 Team Honor Roll must obtain at least a 3.000 overall GPA.

NCAA Division I

Indiana State has been a regular fixture on the WBCA Academic Top 25 Honor Roll and returns to the top position for the third time (2005, 2003). All member's of the 2008–09 Sycamore team recorded at least a 3.25 GPA or higher, while six student-athletes boasted perfect 4.0 grade point averages. Indiana State finished the season 14–16 overall (10–8 in MVC): falling to Bradley in the quarterfinals of the MVC Tournament. Junior guard Kelsey Luna, a First Team All–Missouri Valley selection, was named the Prairie Farms Missouri Valley Student–Athlete of the Year, while pacing the squad with 14.5 points per game.

“We are truly honored to receive this award,” said Indiana State head coach Jim Wiedie. “I believe it’s a testament to the type of young ladies we recruit at Indiana State, their commitment to academic excellence and the tremendous support they receive from our Academic Services Center. I’m extremely proud of our players for accomplishing their goal of being No. 1.”

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

School	2008–09 Head Coach	Team GPA
1 Indiana State University	Jim Wiedie	3.645
2 University of North Dakota	Gene Roebuck	3.580
3 South Dakota State University	Aaron Johnston	3.571
4 Montana State University–Bozeman	Tricia Binford	3.501
5 Bowling Green State University	Curt Miller	3.470
6 University of Northern Iowa	Tanya Warren	3.437
7 Manhattan College	Myndi Hill	3.432
8 Western Carolina University	Kellie Harper	3.428
9 Eastern Washington University	Wendy Schuller	3.422
10 University of New Mexico	Don Flanagan	3.414
11 DePaul University	Doug Bruno	3.402
12 Utah Valley University	Cathy Nixon	3.390
13 Kansas State University	Deb Patterson	3.374
14 Wichita State University	Jody Adams	3.361
15 Lehigh University	Susan Troyan	3.356
t16 Saint Bonaventure University	Jim Crowley	3.353
t16 Cornell University	Dayna Smith	3.353
18 Villanova University	Harry Perretta	3.346
19 University of Evansville	Misty Murphy	3.336
20 Oakland University	Beckie Francis	3.323
t21 Charleston Southern University	Julie Goodenough	3.320
t21 Columbia University	Paul Nixon	3.320
23 University of Wisconsin, Green Bay	Matthew Bollant	3.317
24 University of South Dakota	Ryun Williams	3.311
25 University of Hartford	Jennifer Rizzotti	3.308

NCAA Division II

Making its first appearance on the WBCA Academic Top 25, St. Thomas Aquinas had the second–highest team GPA of any division. All 12 of the of the Spartan student-athletes had GPA's of 3.25 or higher during the spring season, while 10 sported GPA's over 3.50. The Spartans ended its season 7–21 overall (4–14 ECC) after falling to regular season champion Queens College in the East Coast Conference Tournament.

Briana Sloper was named the ECC Rookie of the Year and earned a spot on the Second Team All-Conference team.

"I am extremely proud of this team for their hard work and dedication on and off the court," Kim Lusk, head coach at St. Thomas Aquinas said. "There is certainly a strong correlation between their success and the great academic support they receive at St. Thomas Aquinas. Congratulations to all of the award recipients."

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

School	2008-09 Head Coach	Team GPA
1 St. Thomas Aquinas College	Kim Lusk	3.694
2 Saint Martin's University	Timothy Healy	3.668
3 Ashland University	Sue Ramsey	3.647
4 Michigan Technological University	John Barnes	3.635
5 Abilene Christian University	Shawna Lavender	3.580
6 Seton Hill University	Ferne Labati	3.567
7 West Liberty State College	Lynn Ullom	3.559
8 Rockhurst University	Rebecca Morrisey	3.545
t9 Winona State University	Scott Ballard	3.520
t9 University of Nebraska-Kearney	Carol Russell	3.520
11 College of Saint Rose	Karen Haag	3.499
12 Gannon University	Cleve Wright	3.497
13 University of Findlay	Kate Cummings	3.495
14 Wayne State College	Chris Kielsmeier	3.473
15 Montana State University-Billings	Kevin Woodin	3.472
16 Northwood University	Jeff Curtis	3.471
17 Truman State University	Michael Smith	3.461
18 Southwest Minnesota State University	Mike Jewett	3.460
19 University of Minnesota-Duluth	Annette Wiles	3.447
20 Regis University	Linda Raunig	3.412
21 Adelphi University	Kelley Watts	3.403
22 Colorado Christian University	Tim Hays	3.394
23 Fort Lewis College	Mark Kellogg	3.380
24 West Texas A&M University	Krista Gerlich	3.371
25 Mars Hill College	Jennifer Nance	3.366

NCAA Division III

Maryville University-St. Louis had much success on the hardwood this season. The Saints earned their sixth straight regular season championship and fourth consecutive St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SLIAC) Tournament crown. Maryville set the all-time Division III consecutive wins this past season with 92; that streak will end as the squad is reclassifying to Division II. The Saints finished 22-6 overall, 16-0 in SLIAC play, marking its sixth straight undefeated conference season. Maryville's 19-person roster included 14 with a GPA over 3.5 and three with a perfect 4.0.

"I am thrilled for our young women to have achieved the nation's top academic honor in earning the WBCA's No.1 cumulative grade point average," Chris Ellis, head coach at Maryville said. "As a program, we have always prided ourselves on the student-athlete concept and this year's team certainly exemplifies that philosophy."

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

School	2008–09 Head Coach	Team GPA
1 Maryville University–St. Louis	Chris Ellis	3.625
2 York College	Betsy Witman	3.624
3 Finlandia University	Curtis Wittenberg	3.592
4 College of St. Benedict	Mike Durbin	3.566
5 Calvin College	John Ross	3.503
6 Elms College	Laura Habacker	3.483
7 Simpson College	Brian Niemuth	3.480
8 Messiah College	Michael Miller	3.469
9 Emory University	Christy Thomaskutty	3.456
10 College of Mount St. Joseph	Melanee Atkinson	3.455
t11 Centenary College	Lorie Khalil	3.453
t11 McDaniel College	Becky Martin	3.453
13 Hope College	Brian Morehouse	3.447
14 Gustavus Adolphus College	Mickey Haller	3.439
15 University of St. Thomas	Ruth Sinn	3.436
16 Muhlenberg College	Ron Rohn	3.435
17 University of the South	Dickie McCarthy	3.423
18 University of Redlands	Rich Murphy	3.418
19 State University College at New Paltz	James Seward	3.414
20 Emerson College	Bill Gould	3.407
21 Marymount University	William Finney	3.392
22 Elizabethtown College	Yvonne Kauffman	3.391
23 Chapman University	Carol Jue	3.379
24 Drew University	Gail Gilchrest	3.371
25 University of Wisconsin, Stout	Mark Thomas	3.364

NAIA

After turning in the highest GPA in NAIA back-to-back years (2006–2007), Dana College returns to the top with the highest GPA of any division – 3.763. Seven student-athletes on the official roster turned in 4.0 GPA's during the spring semester. The Vikings finished 2008–09 with a 9–20 record.

"I am very proud of our women's basketball team," head coach Shane Larson said. "Performing well academically was a goal that we set at the beginning of the season, and to do well enough to be the top academic team in the country is truly a great honor. It shows the commitment our athletes here at Dana have to excellence on the court and in the classroom. I am very fortunate to work with such an outstanding group of young ladies."

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

School	2008–09 Head Coach	Team GPA
1 Dana College	Shane Larson	3.763
2 Oklahoma Christian University	Stephanie Findley	3.762
3 Davenport University	Mark Youngs	3.663
4 Concordia University–Nebraska	Drew Olson	3.652
5 Valley City State University	Jill DeVries	3.610
6 Lewis–Clark State College	Brian Orr	3.530

7	Ohio Dominican University	Nathan Bellman	3.529
8	Blue Mountain College	Lavon Driskell	3.524
9	Saint Xavier University	Robert Hallberg	3.487
10	Northwestern College	Earl Woudstra	3.477
11	Cornerstone University	Carla Fles	3.474
12	Bethel College (IN)	Jody Martinez	3.466
13	University of Rio Grande	David Smalley	3.419
14	University of Montana–Western	Kevin Engellant	3.396
15	Saint Ambrose University	Nathan Altenhofen	3.386
16	Mount Marty College	Tom Schlimgen	3.344
17	Shorter College	Vic Mitchell	3.323
18	Indiana Wesleyan University	Steve Brooks	3.313
19	Carroll College	Shawn Nelson	3.285
20	Montana State University–Northern	Chris Mouat	3.272
21	College of the Ozarks	George Wilson	3.264
22	Eastern Oregon University	Anji Weissenfluh	3.257
23	William Woods University	Dan Chapla	3.233
24	Baker University	Susan Decker	3.230
25	Georgetown College	Susan Johnson	3.228

Junior College/Community College

Making its third straight appearance in the top 25, Phoenix College boasts seven of 12 student-athletes with grade point average's over 3.5; four of which sported 4.0 GPA's in the spring semester.

"I am proud of the accomplishments of our team this season," head coach Samantha Ezell said. "It is always an honor to be recognized for our hard work in the classroom, and I want to thank the student-athletes for their dedication off the court."

The WBCA Academic Top 20* Team Honor Roll for JC/CC is as follows:

	School	2008–09 Head Coach	Team GPA
1	Phoenix College	Samantha Ezell	3.378
2	Ventura College	Ned Mircetic	3.352
3	Seward County CC	Toby Wynn	3.328
4	Western Texas College	Tammy Davis	3.282
5	Arizona Western College	Patrick Cunningham	3.278
6	Eastern Arizona Junior College	Dan Dersam	3.266
7	South Plains College	Michelle Wyatt	3.259
8	Dodge City CC	Steve High	3.257
9	Lon Morris College	Rosalyn Floyd Tindel	3.213
10	Lincoln College	Carol Wilson	3.182
11	Kirkwood CC	Kim Muhl	3.158
12	Lewis & Clark CC	Peg Mitchell	3.157
13	Kishwaukee College	Karen Wiley	3.139
14	Gordon College	Jeannine Cavallaro	3.136
15	Johnson County CC	Benjamin Conrad	3.132
16	John Wood CC	Norman Rodriguez	3.114
17	Ellsworth Community College	Ed Geitz	3.067
t18	Marshalltown Community College	Larry Roberts	3.037
t18	Illinois Central College	Steve Garber	3.037

**= Due to the limited number of nominations for junior college and community college, and the GPA requirements, the WBCA has ranked the Top 20 schools.*