



Jeff Ligney
Director of Media Relations

1110 Washington Ave.
Bay City, MI 48708
Voice: (989) 894-2529 Fax: (989) 894-2825
E-mail: jligney@gliac.org
web site: www.gliac.org/

January 10, 2008
For Immediate Release

GLIAC Announces Fall 2007 Commissioner's Award Recipients

BAY CITY, Mich. -- The Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) announced the Fall 2007 winners of the inaugural GLIAC Commissioner's Awards for Academic and Athletic Excellence. The awards, sponsored by Meijer, Incorporated, will be presented after the Fall, Winter, and Spring athletic seasons to six male and six female student-athletes that excel both in the classroom and on the fields of play. The Awards were announced in conjunction with the release of the GLIAC Fall All-Academic Teams in which 585 student-athletes were honored for their efforts.

The six female student-athletes to receive the Fall 2007 GLIAC Commissioner's Awards are: **Melissa Bartlett** of Hillsdale College; **Rebecca Heintzman** of Mercyhurst College; **Rachelle Malette** of Wayne State University; **Amy Palmgren** of Michigan Technological University; **Katy Tafler** of Grand Valley State University; and **Lynsey Warren** of Ashland University.

The six male student-athletes to receive the Fall 2007 GLIAC Commissioner's Awards are: **Vince Cashdollar** of Ashland University; **Nick Gurica** of Hillsdale; **Chris Hammer** of Grand Valley State; **Mark Nicolet** of Hillsdale; **Erik Schumacher** of Ferris State University; and **Jake Visser** of Ferris State.

"These 12 student-athletes exemplify the NCAA Division II philosophy of balance between academics and athletics by excelling in both areas," stated GLIAC Commissioner Tom Brown. "Our conference, along with Meijer Incorporated, feel that it is important to recognize these hard working student-athletes for their outstanding performances in the classroom and on the field of play. The GLIAC would like to thank Meijer for their generous sponsorship of the 2007 Commissioner's Awards and for helping us acknowledge the exceptional accomplishments of this group."

The following are biographies of the Fall 2007 GLIAC Commissioner's Awards recipients:

Melissa Bartlett, a senior outside hitter on the Charger Volleyball team, is a biology major who has maintained a 3.56 grade point average (4.0 scale) while at Hillsdale. She was named the 2007 GLIAC Volleyball "Player of the Year" and was an AVCA and Daktronics All-America First-Team selection. A two-time All-GLIAC First-Team honoree, Bartlett led the Chargers to a 26-8 record during the 2007 season and a berth to the NCAA Division II postseason tournament.

A two-time member of the GLIAC All-Academic Team, **Rebecca Heintzman** is a biology major who boasts a 3.84 GPA (4.0 scale). As the starting goalkeeper on the Mercyhurst women's soccer team, she posted nine shutouts and recorded a goals-against-average of just 1.14 during the 2007 season. Her best soccer was played during the NCAA Division II playoffs as she shutout #22 Quincy (Ill.), 1-0, and then forced a 1-1 tie with top ranked Grand Valley State.

Rachelle Malette, a junior cross country runner for the Wayne State, is a pharmacy major who holds a 3.51 GPA (4.0 scale). She has been named to the GLIAC All-Academic Team twice and has been a member of the WSU Athletic Director's Honor Roll. Malette earned 2007 All-American Honors with a fifth place finish at the NCAA Championships.

-more-

She placed first at both the GLIAC and NCAA Division II Regional Championships this year, winning the races by 35 seconds and 20 seconds, respectively.

Amy Palmgren, a senior at Michigan Tech majoring in computer engineering, holds a perfect 4.00 GPA (4.0 scale). She earned a place on the ESPN The Magazine Academic All-America First Team in 2007 as well as the GLIAC All-Academic Team. A member of the women's tennis team, Palmgren is a four-time All-GLIAC selection who earned Second Team All-GLIAC accolades as the Huskies number one singles player this past season.

A biomedical science major, **Katy Tafler**, has maintained a 3.83 GPA (4.0 scale). A junior forward for the Lakers' women's soccer team, she is a 2007 ESPN The Magazine Academic All-American honoree and has been a GLIAC All-Academic team selections twice. The two-time GLIAC Women's Soccer "Offensive Player of the Year" was named the 2007 Daktronics NCAA Division II "Player of the Year." She set GVSU single-season records for goals (36) and points (85) while leading the Lakers to the NCAA Division II semifinals during the 2007 season.

Lynsey Warren, a senior setter for the Ashland volleyball squad, is a business major who has earned a 3.60 GPA (4.0 scale). A three-time All-GLIAC Academic and All-GLIAC First-Team selection, she has led Ashland to four consecutive NCAA postseason berths. Warren, who led the GLIAC by averaging 12.75 assists per game, helped the 15th ranked Eagles post an overall mark of 26-6 in 2007.

A senior at Ashland, **Vince Cashdollar** is an integrated language arts major carrying a 3.53 GPA (4.0 scale). A four-year starter on the offensive line for the Eagle football team, he has been named to the GLIAC All-Academic Team three times and was a Second-Team All-District Academic All-American in 2007. Cashdollar is a two-time First Team All-GLIAC honoree and was selected to play in the 2008 Valero Cactus Bowl, the Division II Football all-star game.

An accounting major, **Nick Gurica**, carries a 3.92 GPA (4.0 scale) at Hillsdale. He received the Chargers' Lemond-Wright Award which is given to the male student-athlete with the highest grade point average on campus. He is a two-time All-GLIAC First-Team selection at wide receiver, setting school records for receptions in a season (78) and receptions in a game (13) this past season.

Chris Hammer, a junior mathematics major, currently holds a 3.70 GPA (4.0 scale) at Grand Valley State. He is a four-time member of the Dean's List during his career as a Laker. Hammer earned NCAA Division II All-American honors at this season's Cross Country Championships by finishing in the top 30 with a time of 31:36.2. He finished fifth at the 2007 Great Lakes Regional meet, recording a time of 31:48.18.

The starting quarterback on the Hillsdale football team, **Mark Nicolet** is a financial management major that has maintained a 3.60 GPA (4.0 scale) during his career. He is a four-time member of the Dean's List and is a two-time member of the GLIAC All-Academic team. The reigning 2007 GLIAC Football "Player of the Year," Nicolet was a First Team All-Conference honoree and was selected to play in the 2008 Valero Cactus Bowl. He also earned Daktronics Second Team All-American accolades this past season.

Erik Schumacher, a senior defensive end for the Bulldogs, holds a 3.98 GPA (4.0 scale) as an accountancy major. He is a 2007 ESPN The Magazine Academic All-America First-Team honoree as well as a three-time member of the GLIAC All-Academic Team. On the field, Schumacher earned All-GLIAC Honorable Mention honors twice, and ranked tenth in the nation with four forced fumbles this season.

Jake Visser, a senior at Ferris State majoring in history education, carries a 3.85 GPA (4.0 scale). A two-time GLIAC All-Academic Team honoree, Visser was selected as a member of the 2007 ESPN The Magazine Academic All-America First Team. He is a 2007 AFCA First-Team All-American, a 2007 Daktronics and Associated Press Little Second-Team All-American, while also being named First Team All-GLIAC two times as a defensive lineman.