

Western Kentucky University

TopSCHOLAR®

WKU Archives Records

WKU Archives

2022

UA19/16/2 Athletics Press Releases

WKU Athletic Media Relations

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_ua_records



Part of the [African American Studies Commons](#), [Higher Education Administration Commons](#), [Journalism Studies Commons](#), [Mass Communication Commons](#), [Public Relations and Advertising Commons](#), [Race and Ethnicity Commons](#), and the [Sports Studies Commons](#)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by TopSCHOLAR®. It has been accepted for inclusion in WKU Archives Records by an authorized administrator of TopSCHOLAR®. For more information, please contact topscholar@wku.edu.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / January 17, 2022

Athletics / Contact: Zach Greenwell, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

Team photo of national champion WKU Cheer Coed squad is attached.

WKU CHEER WINS FIRST COED NATIONAL TITLE, FINISHES RUNNER-UP IN ALL GIRL

ORLANDO, Fla. — WKU Cheer took home the program's first coed national championship in its history over the weekend, winning the title in the 2022 D1A Small Coed Division of the UCA Collegiate National Championship on Saturday in Orlando, Fla.

The squad finished the semifinals in first place with an 86.2 event score, then claimed the championship in the finals with a 92.7 event score with zero deductions.

Memphis finished second with an 87.8 event score. Other competitors included Florida State, Bowling Green State, Boise State and more.

Additionally, WKU Cheer's All Girl team finished as the national runner-up Sunday with a 91.3 score, just a fraction of a point behind national champion Alabama.

After winning its first All Girl national title last season in head coach Alli Lumpkin's first year at the helm, this marks the first time that WKU's All Girl squad has ever received a top-three finish in back-to-back years. Other competitors in the All Girl Division included Ole Miss, Oklahoma and South Florida.

"In a normal season of cheerleading, these athletes have 365 days to improve upon skills and prepare for the following years competition," Lumpkin said. "It has been less than nine months from the 2021 national competition that the current athletes had to prepare for the 2022 collegiate national championship. WKU Cheer is bringing home a first-place finish in D1A Small Coed Division and a runner-up finish in the D1A All Girl Division. As a program we are determined to make ourselves prominent as a top-three finalist in the years to come. We are grateful for the support from our community, university, alumni and most importantly President Caboni and Director of Athletics Todd Stewart. WKU Cheer is just getting started creating a dynasty of their own."

WKU Cheer also had two couples compete in the partner stunt portion of the competition, which each group had to qualify for by video submission to compete in the final round in Orlando. Nick Jansen and Makayla Bizzell finished in fourth place, while Dakota Finerman and Samantha Terry finished in sixth place.

WKU also had one All Girl stunt group compete, with the group of Ashley Burdsall, Kate Segrest, Kirsten Verble and Madi Sessions finishing in fifth place.



COLLEGE CHEERLEADING NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP





Western Kentucky University

2021 UCA Division 1 Coed Team National Champion

Kneeling (*left-right*) -- Hailee Risen, Austin Harne, Gracie McCloud, Sidney Gilman, Head Coach Alli Lumpkin.

Second Row -- Andrea Lenoir, Melody Quast, Makayla Bizzell, Felicity Grant, Jayla Goldwair, Ashlyn Beam, Katelyn Mattingly, Samantha Ferry, Derby Marshall, Kirsten Verble, Mackenzie Lee, Haley McBroom, Kat Thomas, Cayla Yancy.

Third Row -- Assistant Coach Stanley, Jaeclyn Embry, Michael Carey, Nick Jansen, Matthew Conrad, Jansen Parker, Klark Vesorio, Dakota Finerman, Madison Clark, A.J. Dizillo, Avery Wells



COLLEGE CHEERLEADING NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP



WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / February 25, 2022

Athletics / Contact: Dana Brown, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

Webpage: wkusports.com/womenslegacyfund

Give: <http://alumni.wku.edu/womenslegacy>

WKU ATHLETICS LAUNCHES WOMEN'S LEGACY FUND CAMPAIGN

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – WKU Athletics established the Women's Legacy Fund, a new fund within the Hilltopper Athletic Foundation (HAF) to benefit all eight of WKU's female sport programs, as well as cheer and dance, the department announced on Friday.

"On the eve of the 50th anniversary of Title IX, we are very excited to launch our Women's Legacy Fund through the Hilltopper Athletic Foundation," said Director of Athletics Todd Stewart. "This initiative will help us to appropriately celebrate the tremendous success of our women's sport programs over the previous 49 years, which includes 98 team conference championships, 174 individual conference titles and 101 All-American honors. These teams have maintained consistent excellence for decades, and the Women's Legacy Fund will enhance our eight female sport programs, along with our cheer and dance programs, for generations to come while directly impacting their ability to raise the bar of success even higher."

For the next six months, WKU Athletics will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Title IX with the actual anniversary being June 23, 2022. Throughout the campaign, WKU will be spotlighting the various achievements women have made in athletics after President Dero Downing approved intercollegiate athletic competition for females on January 29, 1973.

In addition to 98 team conference championships, 174 individual titles and 101 All-American honors, WKU Cheer has won two national titles while WKU Dance has won one. WKU Athletics has produced seven female Olympians, including 2012 London gold medalist Claire Donahue (Swimming) and 2020 Tokyo bronze medalist Larissa Franklin (Softball).

WKU has amassed nearly 50 years of tradition and excellence within its female sport programs. The Women's Legacy Fund was designed to build on the success that females have established on The Hill while fulfilling needs and desires of the various sport programs.

More information on the history of women within WKU Athletics can be found [here](#).

The Women's Legacy Fund was created to celebrate the Title IX anniversary, but will live on within HAF for years to come with the intent of impacting multiple generations of WKU female student-athletes.

Donations to the fund can be made via check to the Hilltopper Athletic Foundation with the memo "Women's Legacy Fund" or online [here](#).

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / April 4, 2022

Athletics / Contact: Zach Greenwell, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

Headshot for Audrey McDole is attached.

MCDOLE NAMED HEAD COACH OF WKU DANCE TEAM

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Audrey McDole has been named head coach of the WKU Dance program, WKU Athletics announced Monday.

McDole takes over the reins of the program in a full-time capacity after serving as co-coach of the Topperettes since summer 2021.

In addition to coaching the program, McDole will also provide organization for the team, help prepare routines for gameday and nationals competition, run the program's social media and grow its recruiting and fundraising efforts.

"I am thrilled to begin as head coach of the WKU Topperettes, and I am excited to see the continued investment in our Spirit Programs at WKU," McDole said.

McDole's personal dance experience began with 13 years of studio classes at Dancer's Pointe in Peewee Valley, Ky. She later performed with the Louisville Ballet in The Nutcracker for three years, and she was a member of the WKU Topperettes in the 2011-12 season, including making it to the finals at the 2012 NDA in Jazz.

McDole has also previously served as a lead instructor at Tippi Toes, while also helping middle school and high school teams with choreography, judging and directing.

The Crestwood, Ky., native graduated from WKU with a degree in Hospitality Management in 2015. She and her husband Justin have been married since 2019.



WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / April 14, 2022

WKU Athletics / Contact: Lillie-Anne Mulligan, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

WKU PLACES 204 ON C-USA COMMISSIONER'S HONOR ROLL

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — A total of 204 WKU student-athletes were named to the Conference USA Commissioner's Honor Roll the league announced on Thursday for maintaining a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better during the 2021-22 academic year. It is the second most student-athletes WKU has placed on the list since joining C-USA, behind the 208 who earned the honor in 2020-21.

Every WKU program placed at least five on the list and nine programs had more than 10. Football had the most honorees with 40 total. Baseball had 31 earn the award and women's soccer had 28 on the list.

A total of 3,532 student-athletes earned the honor this year across Conference USA.

Student-athletes with a cumulative GPA of 3.75 or better will also receive the Commissioner's Academic Medal. Those recipients will be announced on Friday.

WKU's Conference USA Commissioner's Honor Roll Recipients

Baseball

Trevor Adams
Ty Batusich
Sean Bergeron
Logan Bowen
Andrew Brockwell
Wade Chandler
Nick Constantine
Andrew Delaney
Bill Duby
Hunter Evans
AJ Fletcher
Tristin Garcia
Aidan Gilroy
Jackson Gray
Cole Heath
Cooper Hellman
Jake Kates
Ricardo Leonett
Brodie Mackay
Brian McAuliffe
Dalton Mesaris
Matthew Meyer
Wil Moritz
Trevor Mott
Eric Riffe
Aaron Shiflet
Devyn Terbrak
Mason Vinyard
Brett Wicklund

Men's Basketball

Camron Justice
Tyler Olden
Noah Stansbury

Women's Basketball

Macey Blevins
Teresa Faustino
Jaylin Foster
Hope Sivori
Jordan Smith

Men's Cross Country

Keegan Barnette
Dylan Duckworth
Jordan Eddy
Will Perrone
Collin Pruitt
Clint Sherman
Dedrick Troxell
Brad Wiggins

Women's Cross Country

Lauren Dowd
Mary Dye
Abigail Green
Savannah Heckman
Maddy Hurt
Carley Maskos
Rory O'Connor
Madeline Powell

Lucy Rutherford
Elyssa Toal
Jenna Vaughn
Heather Whitlow

Football

Omari Alexander
Mike Allen
Matthew Baldeck
Gunner Britton
Javy Bunton
Craig Burt
Demetrius Cain
Adam Cofield
Wes Dorsey
Matthew Flint
Mark Goode
Nathan Griffin
John Haggerty
Colt Jackson
Tysean Jefferson
Juwuan Jones
Antwon Kincade
Deangelo Malone
Chance McDonald
Jakairi Moses
Cory Munson
Brayden Narveson
David Ndukwe
Maximus Pulley
Jack Randolph

Ben Ratzlaff
Kye Robichaux
Tre Shaw
Xavier Shaw
Cameron Stage
Malik Staples
Jerreth Sterns
Boe Wilson
Bailey Zappe

Men's Golf

Luke Fuller
Riley Grindstaff
Thomas Hogan
Connery Meyer
Davis Money
Caleb O'Toole
Aaron Pha
Jack Poole
Elliott Pope
William Stewart

Women's Golf

Sarah Arnold
Kenlie Barrett
Catie Craig
Faith Martin
Rachel Rich
Addison Westbrook

Women's Soccer

Alexis Bach
Ambere Barnett
Ellie Belcher
Kate Busbee
Ansley Cate
Mackenzie Crittenberger
Maddie Davis
Sydney Ernst
Katie Erwin
Sophia Fondren
Annah Hopkins
Anna Isgar
Avery Jacobsen
Ashley Kobylinski
Lucy Lyon
Kayla Meyer
Chelsea Moore
Isidora Pekez
Lily Rummo
Briana Sayoc
Lyric Schmidt
Afton Schraml

Aspen Seaich
Brooke Sleeva
Emily Speidel
Jordan Strauss
Anna Wright

Softball

Maddie Bowlds
Jessica Bush
Bailey Curry
Taylor Davis
Randi Drinnon
Savannah Fierke
Kennedy Foote
Katie Gardner
Brylee Hage
Abby Newman
Shelby Nunn
Maddie Poschke
Jordan Ridge
Taylor Sanders
TJ Webster

Women's Tennis

Laura Bernardos Pescador
Sofia Blanco Galzerano
Paola Cortez Vargas
Alexis Cramer
Cora-Lynn Feiin von Dungern
Samantha Martinez De Freitas
Taylor Shaw

Men's Track and Field

Kaison Barton
Brett Brannon
Elliott Bryant
Joel Dittoe
John Elam
Cedric Johnson
Jacob Luebbehusen
Devon Montgomery
Steven Simmons
Rafael Teodoro de Silva Souto
Borges

Women's Track and Field

Allison Arnett
Aija Basic
Queen Couch
Rachel Flinchum
Audrey Griffin
Ines Lopez Arias
Nikki Ogorek

Rachel Payne
Mary Claire Redden
Aitan Safont Falomir
Samyzia Sears

Volleyball

Callie Bauer
Taylor Bebout
Paige Briggs
Sam Canner
Avri Davis
Nadia Dieudonne
Ashley Hood
Katie Isenbarger
Kayland Jackson
Shannon Keck
Lauren Matthews
Cameron Mosley
Jennifer Rush
Hallie Shelton

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / April 15, 2022

WKU Athletics / Contact: Lillie-Anne Mulligan, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

RECORD 72 WKU STUDENT-ATHLETES EARN C-USA COMMISSIONER'S ACADEMIC MEDAL

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — A record 72 WKU student-athletes received the Conference USA Academic Medal, the league announced on Friday. The mark topped the previous best number of 66 reached in 2020-21. The honor is given to student-athletes who maintained a cumulative grade point average of 3.75 or better during the 2021-22 academic year.

Every WKU program had someone on the list and six programs had more than five. Women's soccer had 15 student-athletes earn the award while baseball had 11 on the list.

A total of 1,171 student-athletes earned the medal this year across Conference USA.

On Thursday, 204 WKU student-athletes were named to the C-USA Commissioner's Honor Roll for maintaining a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0.

WKU's Conference USA Commissioner's Academic Medal Recipients

Baseball

Trevor Adams
Sean Bergeron
Logan Bowen
Aidan Gilroy
Cole Heath
Jake Kates
Ricardo Leonett
Brodie Mackay
Dalton Mesaris
Mason Vinyard

John Haggerty
Juwuan Jones
Maximus Pulley
Jack Randolph
Malik Staples
Boe Wilson

Bailey Curry
Savannah Fierke
Katie Gardner
Abby Newman
Shelby Nunn
Maddie Poschke

Men's Golf

Jack Poole
Elliott Pope
William Stewart

Women's Tennis

Sofia Blanco Galzerano
Cora-Lynn Feiin von Dungern
Samantha Martinez De Freitas
Taylor Shaw

Men's Basketball

Noah Stansbury

Women's Golf

Catie Craig
Faith Martin

Men's Track and Field

John Elam
Rafael Teodoro de Silva Souto
Borges

Women's Basketball

Teresa Faustino
Jordan Smith

Women's Soccer

Alexis Bach
Kate Busbee
Ansley Cate
Mackenzie Crittenberger
Maddie Davis
Katie Erwin
Sophia Fondren
Annah Hopkins
Anna Isgar
Avery Jacobsen
Chelsea Moore
Isidora Pekez
Lily Rummo
Jordan Strauss

Women's Track and Field

Aija Basic
Audrey Griffin
Ines Lopez Arias
Nikki Ogorek
Rachel Payne

Men's Cross Country

Jordan Eddy
Collin Pruitt

Women's Cross Country

Lauren Dowd
Abigail Green
Madeline Powell
Lucy Rutherford
Elyssa Toal
Jenna Vaughn

Volleyball

Callie Bauer
Paige Briggs
Katie Isenbarger
Cameron Mosley

Football

Mark Goode
Nathan Griffin

Softball

Maddie Bowlds

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / April 26, 2022

Athletics / Contact: Zach Greenwell, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

Direct link for businesses to register for Hilltopper Local Exchange: WKUSports.com/LocalExchange

WKU LAUNCHES HILLTOPPER LOCAL EXCHANGE AS NEWEST NIL RESOURCE

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Through its enhanced partnership with INFLCR, WKU Athletics has officially launched its new Hilltopper Local Exchange to strengthen the connections between student-athletes and businesses looking to work together in Name, Image and Likeness.

The Hilltopper Local Exchange is a free student-athlete NIL business registry, custom-designed for approved businesses, collectives, donors, alumni and any others wishing to connect with WKU student-athletes. It will provide a customized portal where businesses and student-athletes can communicate, negotiate and enter NIL transactions.

Businesses interested in registering for the Hilltopper Local Exchange can request access at the following link: WKUSports.com/LocalExchange

Student-athletes will automatically receive access to the Hilltopper Local Exchange through their INFLCR apps.

“After a successful first year navigating Name, Image and Likeness, it has become clear we have student-athletes who are ready to monetize on their marketability and a business community who desire to work with our Hilltoppers,” WKU Director of Athletics Todd Stewart said. “One of our primary goals has been to find unique ways to bring the community and student-athletes even closer together in the NIL sphere while maintaining the institution’s required distance from the specific deals themselves. Hilltopper Local Exchange will provide both sides a streamlined platform to find NIL opportunities through a simple, compliant process.”

“We’re thrilled to bring WKU’s NIL system full circle with the addition of the Hilltopper Local Exchange,” INFLCR Founder Jim Cavale said. “WKU has had great success with their INFLCR powered NIL program, CLIMB, so it was a natural progression to add a Local Exchange platform to close the gap between NIL education, deals, and reporting.”

After being approved by WKU’s NIL working group, registered businesses or organizations can search, filter and initiate conversations with student-athletes to discuss a NIL deal. Student-athletes may also initiate conversations with registered businesses themselves in the Hilltopper Local Exchange.

Once the NIL deal between a registered business and a student-athlete is completed, the business will use the Hilltopper Local Exchange to create a transaction that will produce a direct payment to the student-athlete and automate a disclosure to the WKU Compliance Office.

WKU and INFLCR do not get involved in the deal, and all transactions within Hilltopper Local Exchange are consolidated into one 1099 at the end of the year for easier tax reporting purposes for registered businesses and student-athletes.

The Hilltopper Local Exchange is a new extension of WKU’s “CLIMB” initiative, a comprehensive program designed to help student-athletes grow and capitalize on their brands as Name, Image and Likeness moves to the forefront of college athletics.

Tying to the university's strategic mission of "Climbing to Greater Heights" and the athletic department's "Champions Climb Here" campaign, the CLIMB program continues to position WKU to be a leader among its peers.

About INFLCR

INFLCR, a Teamworks product, is the leading athlete brand-building and NIL business management app for elite athletic organizations. The INFLCR athlete app educates collegiate student-athletes, coaches and staff for the NIL era in a safe and compliant environment, all powered by best-in-class content delivery for student-athletes to access and share content to their social media channels. INFLCR works with more than 4,000 collegiate and professional sports teams with a network of over 70,000 weekly athlete users.

Impactful new features like the INFLCR Local & Global Exchange, provide local and national companies with the ability to find, communicate, pay, and report NIL transactions with collegiate student-athletes, maximizing their NIL earning potential with streamlined reporting for their institution and their personal tax returns.

Visit www.inflcr.com for more information.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / Tuesday, April 26, 2022

WKU Athletics / Contact: Dana Brown, Assistant Director of Communications/Student-Athlete Initiatives

WKU ATHLETICS HOSTS FIFTH-ANNUAL TOPSY AWARDS

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – WKU Athletics hosted the fifth-annual TOPSY Awards on Monday evening. It was the first in-person version of the event since 2019 as the past two years have been held virtually due to the pandemic.

WKU handed out 27 awards in total relating to academics, community service and athletic performance.

Most awards are nominated and voted upon by student-athletes, coaches and staff while some are designated specifically by administration.

Four major awards highlighted the end of the evening. **The John O. Oldham Student-Athlete of the Year Award** is given to the male and female with the statistically best on-field/court performance of the 2021-22 school year. Football's Bailey Zappe was honored with the male version of the award.

Zappe was named Conference USA Football Most Valuable Player after breaking the NCAA single-season records for passing yards and passing touchdowns in a season. Zappe completed 476 of 687 passes for 5,967 yards and 62 touchdowns, helping the Hilltoppers to a C-USA East Division title and a convincing win in the Boca Raton Bowl. The passing yards record had stood since 2003, while Zappe broke the touchdown record set by Joe Burrow in 2019.

Zappe also won the 2021 Earl Campbell Tyler Rose Award and he was named a finalist for the Manning Award, as well as a semifinalist for the Davey O'Brien and Walter Camp Player of the Year awards.

The female award was given to Volleyball and Track & Field senior Katie Isenbarger. She was a second-team All-C-USA selection in volleyball for the second consecutive season after playing in 96 of 97 sets and recording a .385 hitting percentage for the Hilltoppers. She was an AVCA All-Region pick and named to the C-USA All-Academic team.

After a two-year hiatus from high jump, Isenbarger broke her own school record twice during the indoor season. Isenbarger went on to qualify for NCAA Indoor Track & Field Championships where she became a First-Team All-American with a fifth-place finish. She became the second-ever dual sport athlete at WKU to receive the Oldham award.

Volleyball was awarded **Best Overall Team Performance**. The team continued its storied success with a 28-2 record, a Conference USA East Division title, a Conference USA Tournament Championship and a victory in the NCAA Tournament. The team was ranked in the top-25 all season long and matched its best ranking in program history at 15th for the first two weeks of the season.

Audrey Griffin of Track & Field was awarded the **Phillip Hatchett Hilltopper Spirit Award**. The award is given to a student-athlete that represents the Hilltopper spirit in every way possible. They have a positive impact in their community while also pulling the best out of their teammates and self. Past recipients of the award include Billy Tom Sargent (2019, Men's Golf), Emma Kowalkowski (2020, Volleyball) and Taylor Davis (2021, Softball).

Similar to the Phillip Hatchett honor, Mr. and Ms. Hilltopper are two awards nominated and voted on by student-athletes, coaches and staff within the athletic department. It is meant to be awarded to a student-athlete that has great on-field performances, high academic standards and is a leader amongst their team. Best put, it's the student-athlete every coach wants on their team. For the 2021-22 year, **Mr. Hilltopper** was given to Juwan Jones of Football and **Ms. Hilltopper** was awarded to Lauren Matthews of Volleyball.

WKU Soccer took home the **Team Community Outreach Award** for the second consecutive year after logging numerous volunteer hours over the year and raising money for tornado relief and the Stuff the Bus Foundation at their annual 7v7

spring tournament. Malik Staples earned the **Male Community Outreach Award** while Heather Whitlow of Cross Country/Track & Field earned the **Female Community Outreach Award**.

The **Head Coach of the Year** award was split between Tennis' Greg Davis and Volleyball's Travis Hudson.

All award recipients from the 2022 TOPSY Awards are listed below.

2021-22 TOPSY Awards

Male Community Outreach – Malik Staples, Football

Female Community Outreach – Heather Whitlow, Cross Country/Track & Field

Team Community Outreach – Soccer

Male Scholar Athlete of the Year – Jack Poole, Men's Golf

Female Scholar Athlete of the Year – Nikki Ogorek, Track & Field

Men's Scholar Team of the Year – Men's Golf

Women's Scholar Team of the Year – Women's Golf

Male Scholar Graduate Athlete of the Year – Juwuan Jones, Football

Female Scholar Graduate Athlete of the Year – Bailey Curry and Shelby Nunn, Softball

Support Staff of the Year – Joey Case, Sport Psychologist

Administrator of the Year – Doug Paccione, Coordinator of Compliance

Upset of the Year – Baseball over (RV) Kentucky

Head Coach of the Year – Greg Davis, Tennis and Travis Hudson, Volleyball

Newcomer of the Year – Jamarion Sharp

Comeback of the Year – Jordan Ridge, Softball

Male Rookie of the Year – Ty Batusich, Baseball

Female Rookie of the Year – Mya Meredith, Women's Basketball

Mr. Hilltopper – Juwuan Jones, Football

Ms. Hilltopper – Lauren Matthews, Volleyball

Phillip Hatchett Hilltopper Spirit Award – Audrey Griffin, Track & Field

John O. Oldham Male Student-Athlete of the Year – Bailey Zappe

John O. Oldham Female Student-Athlete of the Year – Katie Isenbarger

Best Overall Team Performance – Volleyball

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / May 4, 2022

WKU Athletics / Contact: Lillie-Anne Mulligan, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

72 WKU STUDENT-ATHLETES SET TO GRADUATE THIS SPRING AND SUMMER

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — A total of 72 WKU student-athletes are set to have their degrees conferred from Western Kentucky University this spring and summer. Fifty-nine will be graduating this week and 13 more will earn their degrees over the summer.

The spring graduates have a cumulative grade point average of 3.34, while the summer graduates have a 3.38 GPA, for a combined GPA of 3.35. That mark is tied with the spring and summer of 2021 for the highest graduating GPA since at least 2010.

Fourteen of the 72 student-athletes will be receiving their master's degrees, while the others will be earning their bachelor's degrees or receiving a certificate of completion in a new area.

Degrees obtained include exercise science, biology, sport management, business administration, organizational leadership, criminology, special education, management, civil engineering, recreation and sport administration, advertising, entrepreneurship, marketing, geography, psychology, visual arts, elementary education, physical education, communication disorders, business economics, health care administration, business economics, agriculture, computer science, nursing and finance among others.

Over the 2021-22 academic year, 93 student-athletes have earned their degrees from the institution, including 21 graduates last fall.

Commencement for fall, spring and summer graduates will be held Thursday, May 5, and College Recognition Ceremonies will be held for each of WKU's five academic colleges on Friday, May 6. Fall commencement was postponed due to the December tornadoes in Bowling Green.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / Friday, May 6, 2022

WKU Athletics / Contact: Dana Brown, Assistant Director of Communications/Student-Athlete Initiatives

GADDIE NAMED CONFERENCE USA SAAC CHOICE AWARD RECIPIENT

DALLAS – WKU Senior Executive Director of Sports Medicine and Student-Athlete Welfare Mike Gaddie was honored with the Conference USA Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) Choice Award, the league announced Thursday.

The C-USA SAAC Choice Award was designed to recognize a coach, athletic department administrator or faculty member that is committed to fostering student-athlete development and welfare through a positive athletic and academic atmosphere. Each league school submitted a nominee and the honoree was chosen by the conference.

Gaddie was nominated by WKU SAAC after leading the conference in mental health awareness and advocacy. He oversees WKU's TOPCARE program in addition to serving as the primary liaison/supervisor to all team physicians, medical providers, athletic trainers and sport psychologists.

Gaddie was instrumental in WKU Athletics direction under the COVID-19 pandemic while managing and administering the ever-changing policies regarding COVID-19 testing, masking and vaccinations.

In his service to WKU and the conference, Gaddie is also a member of the C-USA Medical Advisory Committee.

Gaddie is an 18-year veteran of the WKU athletic training department and currently leads that staff of 16 individuals to care for all 16 of WKU's sport programs in addition to cheer and dance.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / May 27, 2022

WKU Athletics / Contact: Lillie-Anne Mulligan, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

WKU POSTS SECOND HIGHEST CUMULATIVE CAREER GPA IN DEPARTMENT HISTORY

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — WKU Athletics capped off the 2022 spring semester with student-athletes earning the program's second highest cumulative career GPA in the department's history.

The cumulative career GPA for all WKU student-athletes is 3.18, just short of the department's record GPA of 3.19 set in the spring of 2021. The top three highest cumulative career GPAs have come in the last three years (2021: 3.19; 2022: 3.18; 2020: 3.14) despite the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on the last three years, including this year's transition to a more normal class schedule.

Twelve of WKU's 14 sport programs have a team cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. About 62% of all student-athletes are currently maintaining a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

A total of 141 student-athletes were named to either the university's Dean's List (semester GPA of 3.4 to 3.79) or the President's List (3.8 or above) this spring.

WKU previously set a new department record last month with 72 student-athletes earning the Conference USA Commissioner's Academic Medal for maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.75 or higher. WKU had the second most student-athletes named to the Commissioner's Honor Roll with 204 earning the accolade.

A total of 93 WKU student-athletes graduated during the 2021-22 academic year. The spring and summer graduates posted a 3.35 cumulative GPA, tying the department's highest mark set in the spring of 2021.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / June 14, 2022

WKU Athletics / Contact: Lillie-Anne Mulligan, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

WKU ATHLETICS CONTINUES TO ACHIEVE ACADEMIC SUCCESS

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — WKU Athletics continues to impress in the classroom with strong marks in the Academic Progress Rate (APR) Institutional Report released by the NCAA on Tuesday.

The APR provides a real-time look at a program's academic success each semester by tracking the academic progress of each student-athlete on scholarship. The APR accounts for eligibility, retention and graduation and provides a measure of each team's academic performance. This year, the APR score was a multi-year average of the 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 academic years.

Thirteen of WKU's 14 programs exceeded the NCAA's mandated 930 minimum, and 10 programs surpassed that threshold by 40 points or more. Nine topped that mark by 50 points or more.

Three of WKU's programs had a perfect score of 1,000 across that time period and six programs achieved a perfect score during the 2020-21 academic year.

This is the first public release of the APR by the NCAA since 2020. In the spring of this year, the Division I Board of Directors approved the continued suspension of APR penalties for an additional year due to the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic.

WKU Athletics had a strong finish to the 2021-22 academic year, notching a 3.18 career cumulative GPA, the second highest mark in the department's history. It was just short of the program record of 3.19 achieved in 2021.

Twelve of WKU's 14 sport programs had a team cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. About 62% of all student-athletes are currently maintaining a GPA of 3.0 or above.

WKU Athletics set a new department record with 72 student-athletes receiving the Conference USA Commissioner's Academic Medal for maintaining a cumulative grade point average of 3.75 or better during the 2021-22 academic year. A total of 204 WKU student-athletes were also named to the C-USA Commissioner's Honor Roll for maintaining a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0.

WKU Athletics' graduating class for the spring and summer of 2022 featured a cumulative GPA of 3.35, which is tied for the department's highest graduating GPA. During the 2021-22 school year, 93 student-athletes earned their degrees from WKU – including 21 who graduated in December – with a combined grade-point average of 3.30.

In December, it was announced by the NCAA that WKU had reached its highest Graduation Success Rate (GSR) in program history. WKU posted an overall GSR of 87, topping the previous high of 85 reached twice in the department's history. In three of the last four GSR reports, WKU has achieved or tied the program's highest mark.

WKU also posted a 66 percent Federal Graduation Rate which is 11 percent higher than the university's general student body (55 percent) and the second highest rate in WKU Athletics history.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / July 5, 2022

Media Relations Contact: Lillie-Anne Mulligan, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

KLEIN NAMED VOICE OF WKU WOMEN'S BASKETBALL AND VOLLEYBALL

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Following a nationwide search for the next voice of WKU women's basketball and volleyball, Hilltopper Sports Properties General Manager Chris Freeman has announced that Brad Klein will fill the position beginning in the 2022-23 season.

"We are thrilled to have Brad join the Hilltopper Sports Radio Network Team, he brings a lot of versatility to the role coming from Syracuse," said Freeman. "Brad will bring passion to the role that will help continue to highlight women's sports at WKU."

Klein is a 2022 graduate of Syracuse University. During his time at Syracuse, Klein served as a play-by-play announcer on ACC Network Extra for volleyball, soccer, women's basketball, ice hockey and field hockey games. He also broadcasted Syracuse football, men's basketball and men's lacrosse games for WAER, Syracuse's NPR affiliate radio station.

He also worked with Syracuse's student radio station, WJPZ, as a play-by-play broadcaster for women's basketball, Central New York high school football and women's lacrosse. Klein is currently serving as the radio broadcaster for the Birmingham Barons, the AA White Sox minor league team.

"It is truly an honor to broadcast for Western Kentucky," said Klein. "The athletic department is extremely committed to women's athletics, which has never been more important. The opportunity to be a part of a national powerhouse in the volleyball team and a thriving women's basketball team means the world. Regardless of what business you're in, it's important to surround yourself with greatness. That's what WKU athletics offers, top to bottom. Hilltopper fans are loud and proud and it's a privilege to represent them."

Klein comes to The Hill to serve as the radio play-by-play announcer for women's basketball and volleyball and will work with women's soccer and softball as the announcer for online streams of home games. Klein will also host the weekly Travis Hudson and Greg Collins Radio Shows during the volleyball and basketball seasons.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / Tuesday, July 19, 2022

WKU ATHLETICS / Contact: Tyler Roper

WKU FAN FEST IS BACK ON AUGUST 13TH!

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – WKU Athletics is excited to announce the return of Fan Fest on Saturday, August 13, from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on the WKU South Lawn.

The WKU Football, Volleyball and Soccer teams will all participate in the event, along with Big Red and the WKU Cheer and Dance teams. Fans can receive autographs and interact with the student-athletes from each team throughout the day.

In addition to meeting WKU's student-athletes, fans can enjoy family fun for all ages with activities such as inflatables, face paint, balloon artists, yard games and more. The first 500 fans will receive a free Tops t-shirt and will have the first opportunity to collect the team posters for football, volleyball and soccer.

Fan Fest will feature a live radio show with Brad Klein, the new voice of the WKU Women's Basketball and Volleyball. Additionally, fans will be able to meet with a WKU ticket office representative to discuss ticket options for the 2022 football and volleyball seasons.

Parking and admission for Fan Fest are both free. Fans can park in both parking garages around Diddle Arena. In the event of poor weather, Fan Fest will be moved indoors to Diddle Arena.

Soccer is the first team back on campus when it hosts Murray State in an exhibition match on Wednesday, Aug. 10, before playing the regular season home opener against Union on Saturday, Aug. 20. Both matches will kick off at 7 p.m. CT.

Football will kick off its season on Saturday, Aug. 27, with a home game against Austin Peay at 11 a.m. CT. Fans unable to make it to Houchins-Smith Stadium can watch the game on CBS Sports Network.

Volleyball will be the last of the three teams to play at home when the Hilltoppers play their first match in Diddle Arena against in-state rival Louisville on Wednesday, Aug. 31, at 6 p.m. CT.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / August 5, 2022

WKU Athletics / Contact: Lillie-Anne Mulligan, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

WKU ATHLETICS ANNOUNCES VOLLEYBALL AND SOCCER BROADCAST SCHEDULES

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — WKU Athletics has announced the broadcast schedule for WKU Volleyball and WKU Soccer that includes a combined 19 streamed regular season home matches, including two on ESPN+. Volleyball will also have all matches – home and away – broadcasted live on radio.

All but one WKU Soccer regular season home match will be available to stream this season. Facebook Live broadcasts include games against Belmont (Sept. 4), UTEP (Sept. 22), North Texas (Sept. 25), Florida Atlantic (Oct. 13), UAB (Oct. 16) and Charlotte (Oct. 28). The September 1 match against Kentucky will air on ESPN+.

WKU Volleyball's August 31 match against Louisville will air on ESPN+ and WKU PBS locally. Matches against Northern Kentucky (Sept. 8), Toledo (Sept. 9), Austin Peay (Sept. 10), Tennessee Tech (Sept. 16), Texas A&M (Sept. 16), Indiana (Sept. 17), FIU (Sept. 30), Charlotte (Oct. 2), UTSA (Oct. 9), Middle Tennessee (Oct. 23) and Rice (Nov. 10) will be streamed on Facebook Live. WKU hosts the Conference USA Tournament November 18-20 and all matches in the tournament will air on ESPN+.

Volleyball's Facebook Live stream for home matches will be a simulcast with the radio broadcast featuring Brad Klein on play-by-play and Ken Marshall as the color commentator. Klein will also be on the radio call for all WKU Volleyball matches away from Diddle Arena.

WKU Volleyball was one of less than 10 NCAA volleyball teams last season with a dedicated traveling radio broadcast. All volleyball matches will be continue to be broadcast on ESPN Radio 102.7 FM and on ESPNRadio1027.com for those outside of the listening area. Pregame coverage will begin 30 minutes before first serve with the post-game show lasting approximately 30 minutes as well. Both shows will feature an interview with Coach Hudson and select shows will feature student-athlete interviews.

The weekly Travis Hudson Coach's Show will return as well. Details about the show will be announced at a later time.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / August 8, 2022

WKU Athletics / Contact: Lillie-Anne Mulligan, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

TEN HILLTOPPERS NAMED EASTON/NFCA ALL-AMERICA SCHOLAR-ATHLETES

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — WKU Softball had 10 members named 2021-22 Easton/National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) All-America Scholar-Athletes and the team was recognized for its 3.55 overall team GPA for the 2021-22 academic year.

Maddie Bowlds, Jessica Bush, Bailey Curry, Randi Drinnon, Savannah Fierke, Katie Gardner, Shelby Nunn, Maddie Poschke, Jordan Ridge and Taylor Sanders were honored as Scholar-Athletes.

As a team, the Hilltopper squad posted a 3.55 cumulative GPA for the academic year. That mark ranked in the top-50 across all Division I programs.

To be recognized, an individual must own a cumulative grade-point average of 3.5 or better.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / August 19, 2022

Athletics / Contact: Zach Greenwell, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

NEW STUDY FINDS WKU GENERATED \$15.8 MILLION IN MEDIA EXPOSURE WITH BANNER DAY ON DEC. 18, 2021

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — A new study has determined that the day of Dec. 18, 2021 – one of the finest days in the history of WKU Athletics – brought nearly \$16 million in media exposure value to the athletic department and the university.

According to Nielsen Sports, WKU Football's victory over Appalachian State in the Boca Raton Bowl on Dec. 18 and Hilltopper Basketball's subsequent home victory over Louisville later in the day generated \$15.8 million in total media value.

Nielsen's analysis accounted for TV/broadcast exposure, editorial mentions, verbal mentions on TV and social media exposure.

"We all knew that Dec. 18 of last year was a special day for WKU and our community, but this study validates the far-reaching impact successful Athletics programs can have," WKU Director of Athletics Todd Stewart said. "Athletics is the front porch of the university in today's landscape, and that is a responsibility we take great pride in. It is always rewarding when our success can help shine a light on the many strengths of our institution."

The historic day began with WKU Football's 59-38 triumph over Appalachian State in the Boca Raton Bowl on ESPN. That game drew an average viewership of nearly 1.7 million people across its 221-minute runtime, per Nielsen, and the TV exposure alone of the game was valued at more than \$8 million.

The game drew additional buzz throughout the day because of the record-breaking efforts of Hilltopper quarterback Bailey Zappe, who broke the NCAA single-season records for both passing yards and touchdowns in the game. Zappe is now with the NFL's New England Patriots.

Hours later, Hilltopper Basketball took center stage for a marquee matchup with in-state foe Louisville, winning 82-72 in front of a packed crowd at E.A. Diddle Arena.

Serendipity led to a massive broadcast audience for the basketball game. Because of COVID-19 cancellations, the game was moved from CBS Sports Network to national CBS. The Hilltoppers and Cardinals ended up being the middle game of an elite national tripleheader that included Gonzaga-Texas Tech on the front end and Kentucky-North Carolina on the back.

There was also additional emotion added to the game as it came exactly one week after the devastating Dec. 11 tornado hit Bowling Green and the western region of the state. CBS devoted significant coverage to the damage and relief efforts, while Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear also attended and was interviewed in-game by CBS from courtside.

The Hilltoppers' victory – WKU's first ever over Louisville in Diddle Arena – carried an average viewership of 933,000 people across the game's 130-minute runtime. The value of that broadcast exposure was valued at \$6.3 million by Nielsen.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / September 6, 2022

Athletic Hall of Fame / Contact: Paul Just, Sports Information Director (ret.)

FIVE HILLTOPPER GREATS TO BE INDUCTED INTO WKU ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Five great names in the history of WKU Athletics will be inducted as the 31st class into the WKU Athletic Hall of Fame in ceremonies set for Homecoming weekend this fall.

The 2022 class includes Claire Donahue (women's swimming), Chuck Eneix (men's track & field), Bobby Rainey (football), Dean Tiebout (football) and Harry Todd (men's basketball).

The induction of the 2022 class will bring the number of former WKU athletes and coaches to earn berths in the school's Athletic Hall of Fame to 166 since its founding in 1991.

The 2022 class will be inducted in a ceremony highlighting the annual W-Club Homecoming Brunch, set for 10 a.m. CT Saturday, Oct. 29, on the main floor (John Oldham Court) in E.A. Diddle Arena on the WKU campus in Bowling Green.

Tickets for the event, which is open to the general public, are \$30 each and can be purchased and/or reserved:

- online at alumni.wku.edu/wclubbrunch22 (then click on the "Registration" box and fill out the reservation form)
- by calling the Alumni Office at 270-745-2586
- by contacting either W-Club Treasurer Bill Edwards (270-791-9881; bill.edwards@wku.edu) or W-Club Executive Director Paul Just (270-792-4247; paul.just@wku.edu)

Each active W-Club member who has paid his/her 2022-23 dues (or is a Lifetime member) may purchase up to two seats at the member discounted rate of \$20 each (additional seats will be at the general public rate -- \$30 each). However, seating is limited and reservations MUST be made — either online, by phone with the Alumni Association, or with Edwards or Just — to ensure seating is available. Non-members and the general public are welcome, but must purchase seats (see above). Letterwinners who have not yet paid their '22-23 dues may do so online with a credit card (at alumni.wku.edu/joinwclub) or at the door with a prior reservation for the event.

The inductees will also be honored in ceremonies on Jimmy Feix Field at halftime of the annual Homecoming football game, set to kickoff at 2:30 p.m. WKU Head Coach Tyson Helton will pit his Hilltoppers against Conference USA foe North Texas at Houchens-Smith Stadium. Tickets for the game are available by calling 1-800-5-BIG-RED (or 270-745-5222). W-Club members with a valid 2022-23 membership card may purchase game tickets at a discounted rate at the W-Club Window at Gate 5 prior to the game.

More about the members of the 2022 WKU Athletic Hall of Fame class:

Claire Donahue / Swimming, 4 letters (2008-11) -- Donahue is the only WKU athlete to win an Olympic gold medal -- as a part of the USA 400 medley relay team at the London Olympics in 2012. And, she is the only Lady Topper swimmer to earn All-America honors, a feat she accomplished twice -- as a junior in 2010 (finishing fourth in the NCAA 100 butterfly) and as a senior in 2011 (second in the 100 fly). Donahue qualified for the NCAA championships three times -- 2009 and '10 (in both the 100 and 200 fly) and in 2011 (in both of the butterfly events along with the 50 freestyle). She led the Toppers to Sun Belt Conference team championships in 2008, '09 and '10 before finishing as the runner-up in 2011. The SBC Women's Swimmer of the Year in both 2010 and '11, she was the Lady Topper team MVP in all four of her seasons on The Hill. Her 51.68 time in the 100 fly in 2011 remains the WKU record; and, her 1:56.41 in the 200 in 2009 stood as the school standard until 2015. Her 52.79 in the 100 (2010) and 1:59.50 in the 200 (also in 2010) are Powell Natatorium records in 2011, she won gold medals in the 100 fly and as a member of the 400 medley relay team in the Pan American Games. Donahue, who came to The Hill from Lenoir City, Tenn., lives in Raleigh, N.C.

Chuck Eneix / Track & Field, 4 letters (1970-73) -- A three-time Ohio Valley Conference discus champion (1971-73), Eneix finished 4th in the discus at the 1973 NCAA Championships to claim All-America honors in the event. His throw of 192-2 in 1973 was the WKU school record the ninth best throw in the nation that spring. The mark lasted 32 years until fellow WKU Athletic Hall of Famer bested the distance by eight inches (192-10). Eneix still holds the OVC championship

meet record in the discus with the 179-2.5 effort he had as a senior (breaking his own record – 174-6 -- set the previous spring) . That is – here, 49 years later – the oldest OVC outdoor track record in a currently competed event. He also competed in the shot put where his heave of 58-4.75 in 1972 bettered the previous WKU standard (57-10.25, by WKU Hall of Famer Eugene Smith in 1970). Overall, Eneix won four OVC titles – the three in the discus and one (1972) in the shot put. He resides in his hometown, Washington, Pa.

Bobby Rainey / Football, 4 letters (2008-11) -- A two-time All-America running back and SBC Offensive Player of the Year (2010 & '11) as well as a member of WKU's All-Century Team (2018), Rainey was a three-time All-Sun Belt Conference pick and ranked among the nation's leaders in all-purpose yards three seasons and in rushing in both '10 & '11. He led the Hilltoppers in all-purpose yardage all four seasons and completed his career with a record 6,906 yards -- still the Topper standard. He set nine additional school records, five that still stand -- career rushing plays (895), yards (4,542) and 150-yard games (11); and, the single season (369) and single game (45) marks for rushing plays. His records for career 200-yard games and consecutive 100-yard games, along with single season rushing yards (1,625) and all-purpose yards (2,101) have been bettered, however, he still ranks among the best ever on The Hill in 27 stat categories. Rainey led the team in rushing each of his last three seasons and was the WKU's top scorer in both 2010 (90 points) & 2011 (102). He played in the East-West Shrine Bowl in 2012 and then played six seasons in the NFL with Baltimore, Cleveland, Tampa Bay and the New York Giants. Rainey, who came to WKU from Griffin, Ga., lives in Fayetteville, Ga.

Dean Tiebout / Football, 3 letters (1986-88) -- Tiebout earned 1st-team All-America honors on teams selected by the AP, the Walter Camp Foundation & The Sports Network as a senior in 1988 and was also a third team pick by Hansen's Gazette. A transfer from Iowa, Tiebout started all 35 Hilltopper games in the offensive line in his three seasons on The Hill. He was a key figure in the O-line in front of prominent Toppers Jeff Cesarone (QB) and Joe Arnold (RB), both members of the WKU Athletic Hall of Fame. Six times he was selected the team's Offensive Player-of-the-Week and, as a senior, he was named the Toppers' "Best Offensive Player" on an offense that gained 2,912 yards rushing. His last two teams went a combined 16-8 and earned berths in the I-AA Championship Playoffs both seasons. In October, 1990, the College Heights Herald made Tiebout an unanimous pick on its "All Decade Team" for the 1980s. Tiebout signed as a free agent with the New York Giants, but a chronic knee injury ended his pro career. He then returned to WKU as a grad assistant on Coach Jack Harbaugh's staff in 1990. From Maywood, Ill., he resides in Country Club Hills, Ill.

Harry Todd / Basketball, 3 letters (1960-62) -- The Hilltopper team captain in 1962 and an All-Ohio Valley Conference selection in both '61 and '62, Todd helped lead the Toppers to three OVC championships and two berths in the NCAA Tournament (1960 and '62). He led his team in rebounding each of his three varsity seasons and is one of only six Hilltoppers on record to average a "double-double" in three-or-more seasons (12.8 ppg, 10.6 rpg as a sophomore; 11.2 ppg, 11.6 rpg as a junior; and 11.8 ppg, 12.5 rpg as a senior) along with WKU Athletic Hall of Famers Ralph Crosthwaite, Clem Haskins, Tom Marshall, Jim McDaniels and Art Spoelstra. His 924 career rebounds still rank him eighth among all Hilltoppers here 60 years after he completed his playing career on The Hill. He remains one of just 10 Toppers on record to lead the team in rebounds three-or-more times. Kentucky's "Mr. Basketball" as a high school senior at Earlington in 1958, Todd was elected to the KHSAA Hall of Fame in 1995. He resides in Cadiz, Ky.

WKU Athletics is excited to announce that four-time NBA champion and Hall of Fame inductee Shaquille O'Neal will put on a concert as DJ Diesel prior to the WKU versus UAB football game on Friday, Oct. 21.

The concert will start at 5 p.m. CT at the Upper South Lawn tailgate area and run for one hour. The football game will then kick off at 7 p.m. CT. Fans are encouraged to wear black to complement WKU's blackout uniforms.

The top 50 Red Wave Point Holders will have guaranteed access to a VIP area in front of the stage for the DJ Diesel concert. The rest of the Red Wave users will be entered to win 1-of-100 spots in the VIP area in front of the stage. Students must register in the Red Wave App by Oct. 14 to be entered to win. Winners will be notified by Oct. 18. Each student will be required to show their student ID as well as their Red Wave Profile to be entered to win. Students will also be entered to win prizes by checking into the Red Wave App at the game.

Parking operations the night of the concert will be the same as every football game. Housing students should walk from their dorm or apartment on campus, and commuter students should park in the Creason lot or PS3.

Shaquille O'Neal is a former professional basketball player who played for the NBA's Orlando Magic, Los Angeles Lakers, Miami Heat, Phoenix Suns, Cleveland Cavaliers and Boston Celtics. O'Neal won the NBA's Rookie of the Year award in 1993, but eventually signed with the Lakers in 1996, and there won three NBA Finals, including three NBA Finals MVP awards, and the NBA's Most Valuable Player award in 2000. O'Neal then went on to play for the Miami Heat where he won the 2006 NBA Finals. For his career, O'Neal made 15 NBA All-Star teams, including three All-Star Game MVP awards, and was a 14-time All-NBA honoree.

After his legendary playing career, O'Neal was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 2016. O'Neal is now an analyst for TNT's Inside the NBA with Ernie Johnson, Kenny Smith and Charles Barkley. The former basketball star now invests in several businesses, and performs at various events as DJ Diesel.

--

Willie Hogan

WKU Athletics

Director of Marketing

DJ DIESEL



PRE GAME CONCERT



VS.



FRI., OCT. 21 | 5:00 PM

AKA
SHAQUILLE
O'NEAL



WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / November 15, 2022

WKU Athletics / Contact: Lillie-Anne Mulligan, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

WKU ATHLETICS ACHIEVES SECOND HIGHEST GRADUATION SUCCESS RATE IN PROGRAM HISTORY

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — WKU Athletics has continued its standards for academic excellence, reaching its second highest Graduation Success Rate (GSR) in program history in the latest report released by the NCAA on Tuesday.

WKU posted an overall GSR of 86, second only to last year's mark of 87. In four of the last five GSR reports, WKU has achieved a mark of 85 or higher.

Six programs achieved perfect GSR scores of 100, while eight programs record a 90 or above.

Volleyball extended its streak of perfect GSR scores to 17 years and has posted a perfect score every year the program has been eligible to report. Women's tennis posted a perfect GSR score for the eighth straight season and for the 10th time in program history.

Women's soccer and women's basketball also posted perfect scores in five straight years, and it marked soccer's 11th perfect score since 2001. The 100 mark was women's basketball's seventh all-time perfect score.

Women's golf achieved a perfect score for the fourth straight year and has been perfect five times in program history. Men's golf posted a perfect score the second straight year.

The GSRs released Tuesday are based on the four freshmen classes in Division I entering from 2012 to 2015. The NCAA calculates the rates based upon the number of student-athletes who graduated within six years after initially enrolling, in addition to those who left an institution prior to graduating but would have been academically eligible to compete.

ABOUT THE NCAA GRADUATION SUCCESS RATE

The Division I Board of Directors created the GSR in 2002 in response to Division I college and university presidents who wanted data that more accurately reflected the mobility of college students beyond what the federal graduation rate measures. The federal rate counts as an academic failure any student who leaves a school, no matter whether he or she enrolls at another school. Also, the federal rate does not recognize students who enter school as transfer students.

The GSR formula removes from the rate student-athletes who leave school while academically eligible and includes student-athletes who transfer to a school after initially enrolling elsewhere. This calculation provides a more accurate appraisal of student-athlete success.

The rate also allows for a deeper understanding of graduation success in individual sports than the federal metric, which provides only broad groupings.

The federal graduation rate, however, remains the only measure to compare all NCAA student-athletes with the general student body at those same universities. Using this measure, student-athletes graduate at the same rate as the student body: 69%. Both student-athletes' federal graduation rate and the student body rate increased 1 percentage point from last year.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / December 8, 2022

WKU Athletics / Contact: Lillie-Anne Mulligan, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

28 WKU STUDENT-ATHLETES SET TO GRADUATE THIS SEMESTER

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Twenty-eight WKU student-athletes are expected to participate in graduation ceremonies and earn their degrees from Western Kentucky University this weekend.

Two of the 28 student-athletes will be receiving their master's degrees, while the others will be earning their bachelor's degrees or receiving a certificate of completion in a new area.

Degrees obtained include marketing, business administration, sport management, business data analytics, recreation and sport administration, health care administration, exercise science and agriculture, among others.

Over the 2022 calendar year, 100 student-athletes have earned their degrees from the institution, including 72 in the spring.

Graduation ceremonies are set to take place on Friday, December 9 in E.A. Diddle Arena.

WKU has continued to achieve high standards in the classroom, earning its second highest Graduation Success Rate (GSR) in program history in the latest report released by the NCAA last week.

WKU achieved a score of 86 GSR, just one point below the all-time highest score of 87 reached in 2021. In four of the last five GSR reports, WKU has achieved a score of 85 or higher.