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**EMPIRE 8 ANNOUNCES FOOTBALL ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM
Chris Sharpe and Gene Lang Named Players of the Year**

ROCHESTER, NY – The Empire 8 announced its 2006 Football All-Conference team with junior quarterback Chris Sharpe of Springfield College being named Offensive Player of the Year and St. John Fisher College senior linebacker Gene Lang chosen as Defensive Player of the Year. This marked the first season that the conference selected separate Players of the Year for offense and defense.

Sharpe, the unanimous choice as Offensive Player of the Year, enters postseason play leading NCAA Division III in rushing (163 yards per game), and scoring (17.6 points per game). He is ranked 10th nationally in all-purpose yardage, while Springfield ranks first in the nation in team rushing, averaging 387.7 yards on the ground per game.

Lang, in addition to being named the first player in conference history to be named Defensive Player of the Year, garnered first-team all-conference accolades for the second consecutive year. He enters NCAA play nationally ranked with 102 tackles in 10 games with 49 solo stops. Lang has recorded 16 tackles for loss and recovered two fumbles in leading the Cardinals defense that limited opponents to 12.4 points per game.

Freshman wide receiver Jared Manzer of Alfred University was a unanimous selection as 2006 Rookie of the Year and also earned first-team all-conference honors. Entering ECAC play, Manzer has caught 48 passes for 624 yards and nine touchdowns, averaging 13 yards per catch. He is averaging 21.6 yards per return on kickoffs and 7.8 yards per return on punts.

Springfield head coach Mike DeLong was unanimously named Empire 8 Coach of the Year for leading the Pride to a share of their first conference title and the automatic bid to the NCAA Division III Football Championship. DeLong is guiding the Pride to their fifth NCAA appearance and seventh postseason appearance overall.

Only four players in addition to Lang received first-team all-conference recognition for the second year in a row, including junior running back Lindy Crea of Hartwick College, who leads NCAA Division III in all-purpose yards (215.1 yards per game). Senior linebacker Andrew Madigan of Springfield (60 tackles) and junior defensive back Steve Stepnick of St. John Fisher (two interceptions and four pass break-ups) repeated on the defense. Senior Brett Kitenplon of Ithaca College (65 points, 11 of 13 field goals) was named the first-team placekicker for the second time.

One member of each team was named that institution's representative on the 2006 Football Sportsman of the Year Team. Empire 8 emphasizes that "Competing with Honor and Integrity" is an essential component of a student-athlete's experience in conjunction with an institution's educational mission. These honorees have distinguished themselves and consistently exhibit the critical traits as outstanding sportsmen.

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Empire 8 2006 Football All-Conference Awards

Offensive Player of the Year: Chris Sharpe, Springfield College

Defensive Player of the Year: Gene Lang, St. John Fisher College

Rookie of the Year: Jared Manzer, Alfred University

Coach of the Year: Mike DeLong, Springfield College

First Team Offense

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Chris Sharpe	QB	Jr.	Springfield
Lindy Crea	RB	Jr.	Hartwick
Mark Robinson	RB	Sr.	St. John Fisher
Jared Manzer	WR	Fr.	Alfred
Sean Nowicki	WR	Jr.	St. John Fisher
Mike Oertel	TE	Sr.	Ithaca
Adam Feit	OL	Sr.	Springfield
Brennan Fortune	OL	Jr.	St. John Fisher
Mike Mestieri	OL	Sr.	Springfield
Brett Monnat	OL	Sr.	Ithaca
Mike Yokopovich	OL	Sr.	Alfred

First Team Defense

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Phil Byers	DL	Jr.	Ithaca
Don Miller	DL	Jr.	Alfred
Greg Pyszczyński	DL	Sr.	St. John Fisher
Tom Blumenauer	LB	Sr.	Ithaca
Nick Gatto	LB	Sr.	Alfred
Gene Lang	LB	Sr.	St. John Fisher
Andrew Madigan	LB	Sr.	Springfield
Marcus Maroney	DB	Jr.	Utica
Brian Nitsche	DB	So.	Alfred
Charlie Stephens	DB	Jr.	Ithaca
Steve Stepnick	DB	Jr.	St. John Fisher

First Team Special Teams (Two players tied at punter)

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Brett Kitenplon	PK	Sr.	Ithaca
Ben Atwood	P	So.	Utica
Mike Mahoney	P	Jr.	Springfield
Kelly Gordon	KR/PR	Sr.	Ithaca

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Second Team Offense

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Paul Keeley	QB	Jr.	Alfred
Jamie Donovan	RB	Sr.	Ithaca
Andrew Jackson	RB	So.	Springfield
Darnell Jackson	RB	So.	Norwich
Elmer Newsome	RB	Jr.	Alfred
Kelly Gordon	WR	Sr.	Ithaca
Rich Sands	WR	Jr.	Hartwick
Matt Gibbins	TE	Jr.	Alfred
Chris Harmon	TE	Jr.	St. John Fisher
Justin Brunell	OL	Sr.	Ithaca
Mike Callahan	OL	Jr.	Alfred
Ralph Drake	OL	Sr.	St. John Fisher
Chris Gray	OL	So.	Ithaca
Mike Jecko	OL	Sr.	Hartwick

Second Team Defense

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Akeem Cedeno	DL	Sr.	Norwich
Mike Nicol	DL	Sr.	Springfield
Mike Penkin	DL	Jr.	Alfred
Andy Rantz	DL	Sr.	Alfred
Greg Abell	LB	Sr.	Norwich
Mike Nowak	LB	Jr.	Ithaca
Chad Pieri	LB	Fr.	Alfred
Kevin Fessette	DB	Sr.	Springfield
Joe Harasymiak	DB	Jr.	Springfield
Jon Klossner	DB	Sr.	Utica
Joe Napoleone	DB	Sr.	Ithaca
Ryan Terlecki	DB	Jr.	Ithaca

Second Team Special Teams

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Chris Pierri	PK	So.	St. John Fisher
Darnell Jackson	KR/PR	So.	Norwich

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Sportsman of the Year

Name	Yr.	School
Mike Callahan	Jr.	Alfred University
Mike Jecko	Sr.	Hartwick College
Justin Brunell	Sr.	Ithaca College
Marcus Adams	Sr.	Norwich University
Derron Walker	Jr.	Springfield College
Nick Suchyna	Sr.	St. John Fisher College
Mike Sanchez	Sr.	Utica College

Honorable Mention Offense

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Jason Boltus	QB	So.	Hartwick
Rob Kramer	QB	Jr.	St. John Fisher
Dan Juvan	QB	So.	Ithaca
Corey Jackson	WR	Jr.	St. John Fisher
James Proniewych	WR	Jr.	Utica
Andrew Cottet	OL	So.	St. John Fisher
Nate Germain	OL	Sr.	Springfield
Larre Harris	OL	Sr.	Utica
Corey Hogan	OL	Jr.	St. John Fisher

Honorable Mention Defense

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Josh Henninger	DL	Sr.	St. John Fisher
Matt Maggio	DL	Sr.	St. John Fisher
Mike Sanchez	DL	Sr.	Utica
Steve Flagler	LB	Jr.	St. John Fisher
Joe Flaherty	LB	Jr.	Hartwick
Matt Driscoll	DB	So.	St. John Fisher
Scott Miranto	DB	Jr.	St. John Fisher
Justin Oelgeschlager	DB	So.	Hartwick
Josh Rammacher	DB	Jr.	Alfred

Honorable Mention Special Teams

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Chris Reynolds	PK	Jr.	Alfred
Bryan Gardner	P	So.	Ithaca