

#AICOMMITTED



2016-17 ANNUAL REVIEW

**Dear Friends of AIC Athletics,**

2016-17 has been a memorable year for the AIC athletic department. We have won regular season titles, Bowl games and NCAA regional championships; have had NCAA national qualifiers; and made an Elite Eight appearance. In addition, a few of our coaches have been recognized regionally for their success.

Individually, our student-athletes have won sport excellence awards, have been named All-Americans and Academic All-Americans, in addition to several All-Region and All-Conference selections.

This past September, 48 percent of our returning student-athletes received t-shirts as part of our 3.0 Club, which recognizes student-athletes with above a 3.0 grade-point average. AIC landed 236 student-athletes on the Northeast-10 Fall Commissioner's Honor Roll, 14 of whom recorded a perfect 4.0 GPA. 55 percent of our student-athletes received a Fall 2017 semester GPA of 3.0 or higher and 52 percent of our student-athletes have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.

We have strengthened our partnership with Team Impact, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization chartered to improve the quality of life for children facing life-threatening illnesses. Eight of our athletic programs are currently paired with Team-Impact children and we have one additional pending match. This places AIC in the top 10 schools nationally with regards to matches.

We have significantly enhanced our community outreach initiatives, including feeding the homeless, participating in the City of Springfield Puerto Rican Day Parade, providing breakfast for underprivileged children, donating over 400 pounds of food to a local soup kitchen, holding a candlelight vigil in support of mental health awareness, planting flags around campus to remember those who perished on 9/11, hosting children from the Springfield Public Day School, hosting a tackle hunger tournament, an Autism Awareness Clinic...and the list goes on.

I hope you enjoy looking through these pages and reading about the many accomplishments of our student athletes, coaches and staff. I look forward to seeing you on campus during the upcoming year. Thank you again for your continued support of AIC Athletics. Go Yellow Jackets!

Sincerely,

Matthew Johnson  
Director of Athletics



# AIC IN THE NCAA's



**VOLLEYBALL** had its best season in program history, finishing with an overall record of 28-7 and losing to the eventual national champion, Concordia St. Paul, in the Elite Eight. The team accomplished many milestones, including winning the NCAA East Regional championship and securing its first national All-American.

**WOMEN'S SOCCER** earned its fourth NCAA Tournament appearance in the past seven years as the No. 5 seed in the East region after an 11-7 mark during the regular season. They lost 3-2 to the University of Bridgeport, the No. 1 seed, in the East Region semifinals.

**MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY** won its third consecutive NCAA East Regional Cross Country Championship. Leakey Kipkosgei finished first with a time of 31:05, Mitchell Byrne finished third (31:37), Kemani Hume finished eighth (32:00), Jacob Boatman finished 12th (32:09) and Siem Mehretu finished in 32:28. Kipkosgei finished 14th at the NCAA National Championship earning him All-America status.

**WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY** stand-out Pascaline Jerotich finished in second place at the NCAA Division II regional meet with a time of 21:23,

which qualified her for Nationals. The team finished eighth overall at the NCAA East Regional Championship.

**MEN'S INDOOR TRACK** had five individuals qualify for the Division II National Indoor Track and Field meet. Serge Gilbert was selected to run the 60m hurdles and finished 14th overall. The distance medley Relay, comprised of Leakey Kipkosgei, Chad Miller, Kemani Hume, and Jashane Brown finished 11th overall. Chad Miller and Leakey Kipkosgei also had solid individual performances in their events. Miller placed 13th in the 400m dash, while Kipkosgei placed 17th overall in the 3k.

**WOMEN'S TRACK AND FIELD** had one individual qualify for the Division II National Indoor Track and Field meet. Dana Bramble had an impressive season, finishing 18th overall in the triple jump.

**MEN'S OUTDOOR TRACK** saw one national qualifier in Kipkosgei, who placed fourth in the 3,000-meter steeplechase, which gave him the sixth First Team All-American honor of his young career.



# NCAA EMERGING SPORTS

Women's rugby got off to a difficult start in the National Intercollegiate Rugby Association (NIRA), however, they proved to be a resilient bunch, finishing the 15s season with a No. 7 national ranking and securing a home berth in the quarterfinals of the national tournament. Eventually, they lost to Central Washington University in the NIRA national semifinal game. Some highlights for the year include taking the defending national champions and No. 1-ranked Quinnipiac University to within two points of a major upset and hosting the inaugural AIC Invitational 7s, which set the standard for NCAA 7s tournaments and has garnered praise and admiration from our peers, the media and several coaches.



## CLUB SPORTS



Men's rugby once again had a great year, bringing home its third straight East Coast Rugby Conference championship. The fall 15s season ended with a 24-7 victory over D1A Iona in its URugby Bowl Game capping off its second straight undefeated fall season. Spring season brought more successes, winning four tournament championships including the Heart of America Classic and earning a spot in the NBC-televized Collegiate Rugby Championship. Sixteen AIC men's rugby players were named All-ECRC, while junior

flyhalf Jihad Khabir was voted Men's College Player of the Year. Off the field, AIC men's rugby held their first Tackle Hunger 7s tournament, raising almost 300 pounds of non-perishable food items for the Springfield Food Pantry, and also hosted their first-ever alumni game.

# AIC ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Student-athletes from American International College are defined by more than just their commitment to excellence on the field — they also strive for success in the classroom.

The 2016-17 academic year began with the AIC Athletic Director's 3.0 Club Induction. The annual ceremony, held at the beginning of the fall semester, recognizes those student-athletes who achieve a 3.0 cumulative GPA or better after attending the College for one year or more. The purpose of the Athletic Director's 3.0 Club is to recognize the student in student-athlete by saluting academic achievement and fostering these young men and women to become academic role models for all student-athletes, especially those new to AIC. At this year's ceremony, 178 returning student-athletes were inducted, translating to more than 48 percent of athletes making the grade for the 2015-16 academic year.



As the year continued, AIC had 235 of its student-athletes named to the Northeast-10 Conference's Fall Commissioner's Honor Roll; with 14 students earning a perfect 4.0 GPA. To be eligible for selection, a student-athlete must have met and or exceeded a minimum semester grade-point average of 3.0 (on a scale of 4.0) during the 2016 fall semester. Additionally, junior Mitchell Byrne of the AIC men's cross country team was named the conference's Sport Excellence Award winner, for both his academic and athletic achievements during the fall season.



Senior Isabela Daudt of the women's tennis team was named salutatorian for the graduating class of 2017.

Many of AIC's athletes are also members of Chi Alpha Sigma. Chi Alpha Sigma is a national scholar-athlete society to honor those collegiate student-athletes who have excelled in both the classroom and in athletic competition. Chi Alpha Sigma recognizes college students who receive a varsity letter in their sport while maintaining a 3.4 or higher cumulative GPA throughout their junior and/or senior years.

# ALL-ACADEMIC SELECTIONS

## ACADEMIC ALL-AMERICAN

**Brian Lizotte**, Men's Rugby

## USTFCCCA ALL-ACADEMIC TEAM

**Dana Bramble**, Track

**Mitchell Byrne**, Cross Country and Track

**Ivy Chepyegon**, Cross Country and Track

**John Chirchir**, Cross Country

**Iman Dumas**, Cross Country and Track

**Jennifer Fannon**, Cross Country

**Kemani Hume**, Cross Country and Track

**Pascaline Jerotich**, Track

**Dahsia Middlebrooks**, Track

**Isaac Sampson**, Track

**Patrick Thompson**, Track

## NE10 ALL-ACADEMIC TEAM

**Riley Brennan**, Women's Lacrosse

**Mitchell Byrne**, Cross Country\*, Indoor Track, Outdoor Track

**Ivy Chepygeon**, Cross Country, Outdoor Track

**Jennifer Fannon**, Indoor Track

**Federica Frew**, Women's Soccer

**Pascaline Jerotich**, Cross Country

**Jessica Lawler**, Women's Lacrosse

**Olivia Magni**, Indoor Track, Outdoor Track

**Lauren Pires**, Volleyball

**Chris Starcun**, Baseball

*\*denotes NE10 Sport Excellence Award winner.*



# COMMUNITY SERVICE



The American International College athletic department encourages service and involvement in the community, and during the 2016-17 academic year, many Yellow Jacket teams reached out to help those in need.

The baseball team's community outreach committee delivered nearly 400 pounds of food to Lorraine's Soup Kitchen in Chicopee to help stock the pantry shelves during the holiday season. The women's lacrosse team also volunteered by cooking and setting up for lunch at the Springfield Rescue Mission in December.

The men's rugby team hosted the Tackle Hunger 7s tournament in March. Rather than pay a tournament fee, each team was asked to collect and bring canned goods to the tournament. Their donations, coupled with the donations of spectators, alumni, and referees helped raise nearly 300 pounds of nonperishable food items, or 113 full meals, which were donated to the Springfield Open Pantry which serves the emergency grocery needs of individuals within the Springfield area.

Members of the men's soccer team have been involved with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America this year, serving as role models for youth in the Springfield community. Big Brothers Big Sisters of America matches between adult volunteers and children between ages 6 and 18 in communities across the country.

The men's ice hockey team has helped serve breakfast to children at Square



One, a local early childhood education and care center. The team also hosted several free youth clinics during the season.

The volleyball team visited elementary school classrooms while participating at the Elite Eight in December in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Also, while on their spring break trip in Florida, the softball team worked with local children at Clermont Elementary, where the Yellow Jackets joined up with PFX Athletics, a nonprofit organization that created the Adopt-A-Team program in 2015. PFX pairs softball teams from colleges and universities across the country that participate in The Spring Games at the National Training Center in Clermont every spring.

The men's and women's basketball teams helped at a skills clinic when AIC hosted the annual Hoop Up Spring-



# COMMUNITY SERVICE



field event, sponsored by Hampden County District Attorney Anthony Gulluni. The day featured a 3-on-3 basketball tournament and skills workshop in addition to a job fair with more than 25 employers from the region. The program also offered suits and dress attire and taught job interview skills for those seeking summer employment.

The men's basketball team additionally welcomed boys in grades 3-5 from the Springfield Public Day School to campus recently for a fun-filled basketball clinic, lunch in the dining commons, and tour of campus in January.

The men's and women's lacrosse teams hosted a lacrosse skills clinic for local children with autism in April. The men's lacrosse team also joined dozens of men's lacrosse squads across the NCAA by hosting a USILA/HEADstrong Foundation Cancer Awareness Game in April to raise funds for cancer awareness and research.

Additionally, AIC continued to be an active partner with Team IMPACT, a nonprofit that pairs children facing debilitating diseases with collegiate athletic programs. The football, ice hockey, softball and women's lacrosse teams welcomed new signees this past year, while the men's basketball team also received a match who will sign in the fall.



# TEAM IMPACT



and/or extended hospital stays within the past three years. The children, who, as a result of their diagnosis, can greatly benefit from a boost to improve their quality of life both socially and psychologically.

Team IMPACT is a 501(c)(3) organization that focuses on improving the quality of life for children facing life-threatening and chronic illnesses through the power of team. They do this by drafting these courageous kids with local college athletic teams. Team IMPACT children are drafted onto the team and become an official member of the team from Draft Day through to Graduation. The child joins the athletic team and the student athletes join the child's support team.

The child gains great strength, camaraderie and support, while the student athletes are taught lessons about courage, resiliency and life perspective that they can't learn in the classroom.

We believe that by focusing on the best experience for the child we can also significantly impact families, student athletes, colleges and communities.

Team IMPACT children are diagnosed with a wide variety of life-threatening and chronic illnesses, yet a common denominator is the impact their diagnosis has had on their quality of life. All Team IMPACT children are between 5- 15 years of age and have been diagnosed with a life-threatening or chronic illness that has resulted in treatment

Currently, eight of our athletic programs are paired with Team IMPACT children and we have one additional pending match. This places AIC in the top 10 schools nationally with regards to matches.



# YELLOW JACKETS IN THE PROS



Many current and former American International College student-athletes continue to achieve in the offseason and following their graduation from AIC.

During the past year, many Yellow Jackets signed contracts with or played on professional teams.

A few former members of the football team earned an opportunity to play professionally. Mike Ford (Kansas City Chiefs), Daquan Holmes (Green Bay Packers) and Omari Manhertz (Carolina Panthers) all received NFL minicamp invitations for the 2017 season. Additionally, Jerrod Shelby signed a contract with the Paderborn Dolphins in Germany. Holmes signed a contract with the Packers in June.

On the pitch, Romina Bell, a former member of the AIC women's soccer team, helped lead FC Neunkirch of the Swiss Nationalliga A, the top league in Switzerland, to a Swiss Cup. Bell has also played for the Austrian National Team.

Following the conclusion of the men's ice hockey season, senior captain Austin Orszulak signed a professional contract with the Adirondack Thunder of the ECHL. He joined several other former Yellow Jackets currently playing professional hockey, including Adam Pleskach (Tulsa Oilers, ECHL and Manitoba Moose, AHL), Jon Puskar (Utah Grizzlies, ECHL), Tom Mele (Cincinnati Cyclones, ECHL), Nick Grasso (Macon Mayhem, SPHL), David Gandara and Jason Popek (Roanoke Rail Yard Dawgs, SPHL), and Chris Porter and Brandon Lubin (Fayetteville FireAntz, SPHL).

Corey Momsen and Anthony Wonenberg, former members of the AIC men's rugby program, signed professional contracts with top rugby teams in the United States. Momsen, an All-American lock, signed with the Austin Huns, out of Austin, Texas. There he is reunited with former AIC men's rugby strength coach and current Huns Technical Video Analysis and Skills Coach Christian "CJ" Dewitt. Wonenberg, who transitioned to prop from eight-man after returning from a major knee reconstruction, signed with the Glendale Raptors after performing well at their open combine in November.

Alex Buque, a former member of the men's lacrosse team at AIC, plays for the Colorado Mammoth of the National Lacrosse League. Bobby Harris, formerly of the men's basketball program, signed with Club Caciques de Humacao of BSN Puerto Rico.

Additionally, several Yellow Jackets represented AIC on national teams. Janis Jaks, a freshman during the 2016-17 men's ice hockey season, played for his native Latvia at the 2017 IIHF World Championships, becoming the first player in AIC and Atlantic Hockey history to play for a national team at the World Championships.

Tommy Clark of the men's rugby team was also selected as a member of the USA U-20 team, while Jihad Khabir trained with the USA Olympic 7s team.

For women's rugby, Bulou Magitoga was named to the USA Women's 7s team for the Las Vegas Invitational. Magitoga is also a member of the Berkley All-Blues Rugby team that competes in the Women's Premier League.

# NATIONAL AND REGIONAL HONORS



## ALL-AMERICANS

**Kayla Clark**, Women's Rugby  
**Anne-Laurence Harvey**, Women's Rugby  
**Bridget Kahele**, Women's Rugby  
**Leakey Kipkosgei**, Cross Country and Outdoor Track  
**Anna Mbengam**, Women's Rugby  
**Diva Rivas-Reyes**, Volleyball  
**Dana Watts**, Women's Basketball

## ALL-REGION

**Jacob Boatman**, Indoor Track  
**Dana Bramble**, Indoor Track  
**Jashane Brown**, Indoor Track and Outdoor Track  
**Mitchell Byrne**, Cross Country and Outdoor Track  
**Anais Chareyron**, Women's Soccer  
**Ivy Chepyegon**, Outdoor Track  
**Devonte Dillion**, Football  
**Iman Dumas**, Indoor Track  
**Federica Frew**, Women's Soccer  
**Serge Gilbert**, Indoor Track  
**Nick Green**, Indoor Track  
**Alyssa Guyon**, Outdoor Track  
**Daquan Holmes**, Football  
**Kemani Hume**, Cross Country, Indoor Track and Outdoor Track  
**Pascaline Jerotich**, Cross Country,

Indoor Track and Outdoor Track  
**Alexis Johnson**, Indoor Track  
**Leakey Kipkosgei**, Cross Country, Indoor Track and Outdoor Track  
**Dolores Kopren**, Volleyball  
**Kurt Lungrin**, Indoor Track  
**Olivia Magni**, Indoor Track and Outdoor Track  
**Jessica Margareta**, Women's Soccer  
**Siem Mehretu**, Cross Country, Indoor Track and Outdoor Track  
**Dahsia Middlebrooks**, Indoor Track and Outdoor Track  
**Chad Miller**, Indoor Track and Outdoor Track  
**Danny Omoregie**, Football  
**Diva Rivas-Reyes**, Volleyball  
**Mercy Rivera**, Volleyball  
**Andre Rolim**, Indoor Track  
**Isaac Sampson**, Indoor Track  
**Jerrod Shelby**, Football  
**Naquan Smith**, Indoor Track and Outdoor Track  
**Patrick Thompson**, Indoor Track  
**Stephanie Tweer**, Women's Soccer  
**Dana Watts**, Women's Basketball



# CONFERENCE HONORS



**PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**Jihad Khabir**, Men's Rugby  
**Leakey Kipkosgei**, Cross Country and  
Outdoor Track  
**Diva Rivas-Reyes**, Volleyball

**ROOKIE OF THE YEAR**

**Jana Potic**, Volleyball

**DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

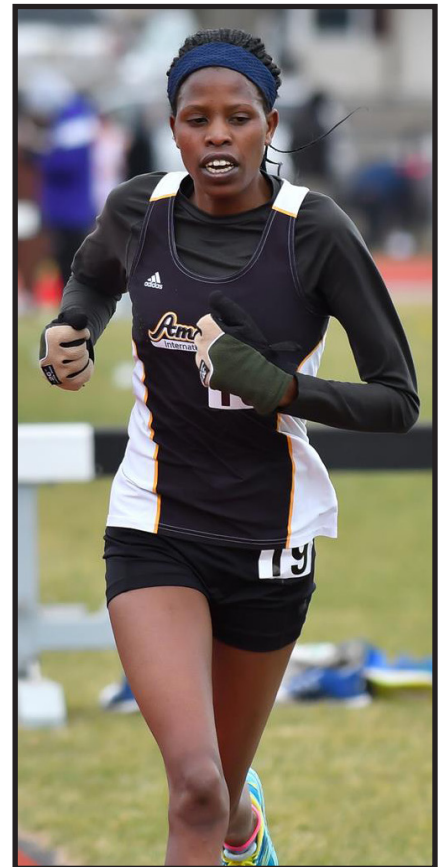
**Danny Omoregie**, Football (Lineman)  
**Mercy Rivera**, Volleyball (Libero)



# CONFERENCE HONORS

## FIRST TEAM

**Skyler Adams**, Men's Rugby  
**Christian Adams**, Men's Rugby  
**Mitchell Byrne**, Cross Country  
**Blake Gurgul**, Men's Rugby  
**Matthew Jones**, Men's Rugby  
**Royal Jones**, Men's Rugby  
**Daquan Holmes**, Football (Defense)  
**Kemani Hume**, Cross Country  
**Pascaline Jerotich**, Cross Country  
**Jihad Khabir**, Men's Rugby  
**Leakey Kipkosgei**, Cross Country  
**Dolores Kopren**, Volleyball  
**Jessica Margareta**, Women's Soccer  
**Corey Momsen**, Men's Rugby  
**Danny Omoregie**, Football (Defense)  
**Diva Rivas-Reyes**, Volleyball  
**Mercy Rivera**, Volleyball  
**Jerrold Shelby**, Football (Defense)  
**Devonte Dillion**, Football (Defense)  
**Dana Watts**, Women's Basketball  
**Malik Walker**, Men's Rugby



## SECOND TEAM

**Anthony Appleton**, Football (Defense)  
**Jacob Boatman**, Cross Country  
**Anais Chareyron**, Women's Soccer  
**Ivy Chepyegon**, Cross Country  
**Tommy Clark**, Men's Rugby  
**Chelsea Davis**, Field Hockey  
**Jake Durham**, Men's Soccer  
**Nick Green**, Cross Country  
**Brianna Kenney**, Women's Soccer  
**Michele Magistrali**, Men's Rugby  
**Omari Manhertz**, Football (Defense)  
**Marcus McIntyre**, Men's Rugby  
**Johanna Nilsson**, Women's Soccer  
**Jana Potic**, Volleyball  
**Imani Stepney**, Women's Basketball  
**Stephanie Tweer**, Women's Soccer



# CONFERENCE HONORS

## THIRD TEAM

**Iman Dumas**, Cross Country  
**Nicalus Franklyn**, Men's Rugby  
**Federica Frew**, Women's Soccer  
**Stephen Fobes**, Men's Rugby  
**Matt Krause**, Baseball  
**Justin Leaphart**, Men's Rugby  
**Jamie Mainez**, Softball  
**Siem Mehretu**, Cross Country  
**Lasse Olrik**, Men's Soccer  
**Lauren Pires**, Volleyball  
**Chris Starcun**, Baseball  
**Kurtis Werner**, Men's Rugby  
**Marquis Williams**, Men's Rugby



## ALL-ROOKIE TEAM

**Ryan Bruning**, Baseball  
**Azeem Cooper**, Football  
**Chelsea Davis**, Field Hockey  
**Jake Durham**, Men's Soccer  
**Enara Foncea**, Field Hockey  
**Steven Hernandez**, Men's Soccer  
**CJ Ibezim**, Football  
**Matt Krause**, Baseball  
**Carleyah McLean**, Women's Tennis  
**Jana Potic**, Volleyball  
**Matt Sayegh**, Men's Lacrosse  
**Rashana Siders**, Women's Basketball  
**Ju'an Williams**, Football



# 2016-17 IN REVIEW



## BASEBALL:

- Freshman Matt Krause dominated the NE10, leading AIC in RBIs, with 36, and triples, with four. He was named to the NE10's Third Team All-Conference and All-Rookie Team. He was additionally named AIC's First-Year Male Student Athlete of the Year.
- The team finished with a 16-28 record, led by senior Chris Starcun at the plate. He led the team in batting average at .331 and slugging percentage at .517.
- Coach Nick Callini broke the program record for wins by a head coach. He now has 176 wins through the 2017 season, with a victory on May 7 over New Haven. This broke Henry Butova's previous record of 175 wins.

## MEN'S BASKETBALL:

- Finished the year with an 11-17 record, led on offense by a balanced effort: Jayvon Pitts-Young (14.4 points), Juwan Moody (13.9), Bruce Spruell (12.6) and Tahlil Swan (11.1) all averaged double figures throughout the season.
- The team had an exciting early-season 71-68 win against Holy Family Univer-

sity on November 13, with Moody sinking a three-pointer with three seconds remaining to give AIC the lead.

- On Senior Day on February 21, the Yellow Jackets had a marquee 92-80 win against Adelphi University. Each of AIC's five seniors — Moody, Max Risch, Justin Daniel, Rasheed Howard and Henry Vilfort — made an appearance in the game.

## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL:

- As just a sophomore, Dana Watts had one of the best seasons of any AIC athlete in recent memory. She racked up All-American honors from two different organizations after an electrifying season in which she recorded 19 double-doubles, averaging 22.6 points per game and 11.4 rebounds per game. She ranked second in the nation in points per game and sixth in total double-doubles.
- As a whole, the team finished second in the Northeast-10 Conference's Southwest Division, with a 19-10 overall mark and a 14-6 mark in conference.
- Senior Imani Stepney earned Second Team All-Conference honors, while freshman Rashana Siders made the All-Rookie team.



# 2016-17 IN REVIEW



## WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY:

- Individually, Pascaline Jerotich had a stellar senior year, earning an individual nationals berth after placing second at the NCAA East Regional meet.
- Both Jerotich and Iman Dumas (18th place) earned All East-Region honors for their performances at the regional meet.
- Jerotich (third), Ivy Chepyegon (ninth) and Dumas (18th) each were named to an NE10 All-Conference Team for their individual finishes at the conference meet, where the Yellow Jackets placed sixth as a team.

- AIC had a tough schedule, playing some of the top teams in the region, and posted wins over regionally ranked opponents in Queens College and Adelphi University.

## MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY:

- The team enjoyed an immense amount of success, winning both the Northeast-10 Conference and NCAA East Regional meets for the third consecutive year. The squad of Jacob Boatman, Mitchell Byrne, John Chirchir, Nick Green, Kemani Hume, Leakey Kipkosgei and Siem Mehretu made the trip south to Florida for the NCAA National Championship meet, where Kipkosgei placed 14th individually to take home All-American honors.
- Kipkosgei — who also won the individual NE10 Championship and East Region titles — was named the NE10 and USTFCCCA East Region Athlete of the Year.
- Head coach Leo Mayo earned Coach of the Year honors for both the NE10 and USTFCCCA's East Region.
- AIC had five runners earn All-Region honors: Boatman, Byrne, Hume, Kipkosgei and Mehretu.

conference meet, where the Yellow Jackets placed sixth as a team.

## FIELD HOCKEY:

- Rookie center back Chelsea Davis came in with a bang, scoring the winning goal in overtime in the team's season-opening 1-0 win over St. Thomas Aquinas. She proved to be no flash in the pan, leading the NE10 in defensive saves, the first rookie to do so in conference history, and earning a spot on the All-Rookie Team.
- The Yellow Jackets spent four straight weeks ranked as one of the ten best teams in the nation, as they sped out to a 10-3 record to start the season. Among the highlights of the stretch was a 4-1 drubbing of then-No. 7 Adelphi at Abdow Field.
- The Jackets proved clutch time and again, winning six matches in overtime, including three straight, with 1-0 double overtime wins against Franklin Pierce and Southern New Hampshire and a 2-1 overtime victory against Bentley. Six different players had the six decisive goals.

## FOOTBALL:

- AIC had nine players receive All-Conference hon-

# 2016-17 IN REVIEW



Following the season, Holmes signed a contract with the Green Bay Packers of the NFL as an undrafted free agent.

## GOLF:

- The team, under first-year Director of Golf Dan Lapierre, enjoyed many successes throughout the season, including the Yellow Jackets winning their own AIC Invitational on October 31. Senior Max Bock placed second at nine over, while Robert Libiszewski placed sixth at 13 over.
- Libiszewski had a successful season as a freshman, including kicking off his collegiate career by shooting a five-under at the Franklin Pierce Invitational on September 12. He was named the team's MVP. Bock was also one of the team's stars, placing in the top five twice.

- At the NE10 Championships, the team placed seventh, with a 14th-place finish from Libiszewski (seven over) and a 15th-place finish from Bock (eight over).

ors, with Danny Omoregie being named the NE10's Defensive Lineman of the Year. Omoregie, Jerrod Shelby, Daquan Holmes, and Devonte Dillion were each named to the first team, Anthony Appleton and Omari Manhertz were on the second team and CJ Ibezim, Azeem Cooper, and Ju'an Williams made the All-Rookie Team.

- The team finished the year with a 4-7 record; including a .500 record at home. The defense stole the show for AIC, with the Yellow Jackets shutting out opponents twice this year.

- Dillion, one of those defensive stars, received national attention for his one-handed interception and subsequent 26-yard return that helped preserve a low-scoring AIC victory on September 17 against Pace University. The play was picked up on multiple outlets, including being featured on ESPN, Bleacher Report and CBS Sports.

- Holmes broke the school and NE10 records for career interceptions, with his 20th interception breaking the mark in the final game of his career against Saint Anselm College on November 12.



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## ICE HOCKEY:

- It was a year of firsts for the Yellow Jackets: The team had a brand-new coach in alumnus and former graduate assistant coach Eric Lang, who replaced longtime head coach Gary Wright; AIC moved to a new home rink, the MassMutual Center in downtown Springfield; and half of the team was made up of brand-new collegiate players: 13 freshmen.
- The Yellow Jackets finished second in the nation during the regular season with 124 points by their freshman class, just behind Boston University, which had 127 points recorded by its rookies. Blake Christensen (21 points) and Dominik Florian (20 points) led the way offensively for AIC.
- Freshman goaltender Zackarias Skog had one of the best seasons by a goalie in team history, with a goals-against average of 3.06, the second-best single-season performance by a Yellow Jacket in the D-I era.
- Freshman defenseman Janis Jaks made the Latvian national team, and competed at the 2017 IIHF World Championship. He was not only the first hockey player to make it on any national team from the Yellow Jackets, but also the first in the history of Atlantic Hockey.
- AIC finished with an 8-20-8 record, with multiple statistical improvements from last season, particularly on the defensive end — AIC allowed 35 fewer goals this season compared to last season, and allowed nearly 8.5 fewer shots on goal per game compared to last year.

## MEN'S LACROSSE:

- "Save by Sayegh" was the call of the year as the rookie phenom sizzled in net. He stopped a single-season record 250 shots, leading the nation in saves and earning the goalkeeper's spot on the NE10



All-Rookie Team. He made 15 or more saves eight times, including a season-high 25 against Assumption.

- In the season finale, the Yellow Jackets took to the field with the aim of lifting one of their own with a win; sophomore Andrew Gingras's father had passed away over the winter and the team was playing for him. Overcoming the emotions, a torrential downpour, and a 9-7 deficit heading into the final frame of regulation, the Yellow Jackets rallied to tie the game and win in overtime on a rocket by Quinn Caesar.

## WOMEN'S LACROSSE:

- A senior class that already had made their mark rewrote the program's record book: Jessica Lawler had a single-game record seven assists against Post and finished fourth in points, seventh in goals, and third in assists all-time. Riley Brennan ended up with 119 goals, third-most ever, along with ending eighth in points. Stefanie Dufresne recorded the fourth-most assists, sixth-most points, third-most ground balls (first among field players), and second-most draw controls and caused turnovers. Alexis Torosian ended her lacrosse career second in ground balls, third in saves, and top of the list in

# 2016-17 IN REVIEW



the team its second straight bowl win and undefeated 15s season. AIC's successes were recognized with an astonishing 16 All-ECRC selections, enough to fill an entire starting lineup and then some.

- At the Collegiate Rugby Championships, the Yellow Jackets went undefeated in pool play, winning 12-7 over the University of Arizona and drawing UCLA, 19-19, and Virginia Tech, 12-12. As the third seed in the Plate Bracket, they toppled Arizona again, 17-14, earning a nationally televised contest on NBC Sports Network, where the team came up just short against Dartmouth, 26-21.

- Former Yellow Jackets Corey Momsen and Anthony Wonenberg, who graduated in December 2016, continued their rugby careers. Momsen signed with the Austin Huns, while Wonenberg joined the Glendale Raptors.

wins; she led the nation in saves her sophomore year and led the NE10 in stops once more as a senior. The three players atop the list of games played graduated in 2017, with Lawler (67), Dufresne (66), and defender Abigail Cavallo (65) leading the program.

- The team rang up some big late-season wins, toppling Southern New Hampshire in overtime, 16-15, and taking out Southern Connecticut by a count of 16-13. The win against SNHU was the program's first over the Penmen, and was decided on a hat-trick goal by Brittany Hutchison.

- The offense found its stride late in the year; through the first 11 games, the team had scored 86 goals (7.8 goals/game), but in the last five, the offensive output nearly doubled as the team tallied 73 goals (14.6 goals/game).

## MEN'S RUGBY:

- The team ran the table once more in the East Coast Rugby Conference during 15s season, earning a third consecutive conference championship.

- AIC rallied against Iona for a 26-7 win in an ACRC bowl game, giving

## WOMEN'S RUGBY:

- The team, against a schedule that featured perennial national powers, performed more than satisfactorily in AIC head coach Peter Lang's first year, winning 20 games to finish above .500 for the third straight season.

- During the fall 15s season, the team took down



# 2016-17 IN REVIEW

West Chester University and Norwich University, and pushed defending and eventual national champion Quinnipiac University all the way to the brink in a thrilling 38-36 setback, earning a berth in the National Intercollegiate Rugby Association tournament. There, the Yellow Jackets avenged a season-opening defeat against Dartmouth by dispatching the Big Green, 33-29, before falling to Central Washington University in the national semifinals.

- In April, the team hosted 12 teams in its first-ever AIC Invitational, winning over West Chester and the University of New Hampshire.
- Several Yellow Jackets received individual honors as well. Kayla Clark, Anne-Laurence Harvey and Bridget Kahele each earned First Team NIRA All-American honors, with Anna Mbengam being named to the honorable mention team.

## MEN'S SOCCER:

- The men's soccer team finished with the second-best record in program history at 8-9-1 overall and a 6-6-1 mark in conference. The team earned just the sixth playoff berth in program history, finishing tied for sixth in the difficult NE10.
- AIC held its own in a tough conference, which had five teams qualify for the NCAA East Regional. One of its most notable wins came against Franklin Pierce, when freshman Jake Durham notched a double-overtime goal on the road on September 21st to give AIC a 2-1 win over the eventual NCAA qualifier.
- Durham received All-Conference honors, earning spots on both the Second Team and All-Rookie Team. Senior Lasse Orlík was named to the third team, while freshman Steven Hernandez joined Durham on the All-Rookie Team.
- Goalkeeper Sebastian Tamayo ended his career with his name all over the AIC record books. At the conclusion of his senior season, he ranked first in program history

in career wins (17) and shutouts (nine), and sixth in career saves (279).

- Sophomore Alejandro Alvarez found his way into ESPN's SportsCenter Top 10 Plays on October 28, when his upper 90 screamer helped the men's soccer team cruise past Bentley University in a 5-0 win in AIC's home finale. The goal spread quickly over social media and was featured as the ninth-best play of the evening on SportsCenter. The goal was also featured several times on Soccer AM, a popular British soccer talk show.

## WOMEN'S SOCCER:

- The Yellow Jackets enjoyed a strong season, reaching the NCAA Tournament for the first time in Kevon Isa's tenure as head coach thanks to a 9-5-0 mark in the NE10 and an 11-7-1 overall record in regular season play.
- Defense was the key for AIC, which allowed a league-low 12 goals in 14 conference games. The Yellow Jackets were the only team to allow less than a goal per game in NE10 play.
- Among the notable wins was a 1-0 victory at then-no. 4 Stonehill, where the Jackets held one of the nation's best teams to a single shot.
- The Yellow Jackets ran into the Skyhawks again in the NCAAs, where AIC downed the NE10's Tour-



# 2016-17 IN REVIEW

nament champions 3-1 behind a three-goal second-half outburst.

- Awards abounded for the team, as seven players earned All-NE10 honors, with five taking home All-New England selections by the NEWISA and Jessica Margaretta and Anais Chareyron being named to the NSCAA All-East Region Team. Additionally, Margaretta was named NE10 Woman of the Year for women's soccer. The squad also had 27 players named to the NE10 Fall Commissioner's Honor Roll, with Federica Frew earning an Academic All-Conference nod, and earned an NSCAA Ethics and Sportsmanship Award. Finally, Isa was named AIC's Coach of the Year.

## SOFTBALL:

- Senior Alyssa Camargo led the way in the circle, starting 15 games and posting a 2.39 ERA, with eight complete games.
- The team finished with a 16-23 record, and was led offensively by senior Jillian Bedard (.333 average) and redshirt junior Yami Lopez-Perez (.292). Lopez-Perez had 35 hits and a .400 on-base percentage, both tops on the squad.
- Junior Jamie Mainez was named to the NE10 Third



Team All-Conference. She hit .284 with five doubles and one home run.

- Alexa DiLeo was perfect in the field, successfully completing all 293 chances (283 putouts, 10 assists) at first base.

## WOMEN'S TENNIS:

- First-year player Carleyah McLean was named to the NE10 All-Rookie Team, after posting singles wins against New Haven, Franklin Pierce and Saint Michael's.
- The squad posted a team victory against Saint Rose.

- Senior captains Isabela Daudt and Eleana Fulop also had strong performances in their final seasons, including teaming up for doubles wins against Saint Rose. Daudt had three wins at singles, while Fulop had four wins at singles.

## MEN'S TRACK AND FIELD:

- AIC had multiple qualifiers for the NCAA Division II Indoor National Championships: Chad Miller in the 400 meters, Leakey Kipkosgei in the 3,000 meters, Serge Gilbert in the 60 meter hurdles and Kipkosgei, Miller, Kemani Hume and Jashane Brown in the distance medley relay.



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- The team fell just 10 points short of its third consecutive conference team title at the NE10 Indoor Championships. Kipkosgei was named the Most Outstanding Performer for the men's track events at the NE10 Championships after winning the one mile and 3,000 meters and placing second in the 800 meters.

- The men had 24 athletes named to the USTFCCCA All-East Region team.

- During outdoor season, Kipkosgei placed fourth in the 3,000 meter steeplechase at the NCAA Division II Outdoor Championships. He also broke a five-year-old school record in the 1,500 meters when he won the event at the NE10 Championships. As just a sophomore, Kipkosgei now has a total of six First Team All-American honors — two for cross country, two for indoor track, and two for outdoor track — to his name, in addition to a Second Team nod for indoor track.

- Assistant Coach Brian Fuller, who works with the distance runners, was named the USTFCCCA East Region Assistant Coach of the Year



during indoor season.

## WOMEN'S TRACK AND FIELD:

- Dana Bramble participated in the triple jump at indoor nationals, finishing 18th with a mark of 38 feet, 0.25 inches.

- The team placed fourth at the NE10 Indoor Championships, behind Bramble — who was named the meet's Most Outstanding Performer for the women's field events after sweeping the long and triple jump — and Pascaline Jerotich, who placed third in the one mile and second in the 3,000 meters.

- The women had eight athletes earn All-East Region honors from the USTFCCCA during indoor season and also had six nods for outdoor season.

- Alyssa Guyon had a strong year in the discus, placing second in the event individually at the NE10 Outdoor Championships.

## VOLLEYBALL:

- The volleyball team enjoyed



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its most successful year in program history, qualifying for the Elite Eight after previously never winning an NCAA game in team history. The team's 28-7 record marked the second-best winning percentage in the team's 43-year history.

- Sophomore Diva Rivas-Reyes was named a Division II All-America Honorable Mention, the first All-American selection in team history, in addition to being named to the AVCA All-Region team and the NCAA All-East Region Tournament team.

- The team finished second in the NE10 with an 11-3 mark in conference, and Rivas-Reyes was also named the NE10 Player of the Year. The Yellow Jackets nearly swept the conference's postseason awards, with junior Mercy Rivera tabbed as Libero and Defensive Player of the Year. She joined Rivas-Reyes and sophomore Dolores Kopren on the first team. Freshman Jana Potic earned Rookie of the Year honors and also

was placed on the second team and All-Rookie team. Senior Lauren Pires was named to the conference's third team.

- AIC earned wins over Le Moyne, NYIT and Daemen in the NCAA East Regional before falling to top-ranked and eventual national champion Concordia-Saint Paul in the Elite Eight round in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

## WRESTLING:

- It was a rebuilding year for a young and hungry group of wrestlers under first year coach Rich Hasenfus, who had just six wrestlers on the roster. Nevertheless, the goal was to get better every day, and by that measure, the team had a successful season.

- Junior heavyweight Jenard Rosemond shined all season long, pinning 22 opponents and finishing in the top four in three different tournaments. He won the heavyweight bracket at the Jim Aguiar Invita-



# 2016-17 ATHLETIC AWARDS BANQUET

The many accomplishments of American International College student-athletes during the 2016-17 academic year were acknowledged at the annual Athletic Department Awards ceremony, hosted on April 24 at the Griswold Theater.

The President's Cup, the highest honor of the night, was presented to women's basketball sophomore **Dana Watts**. It is awarded to the student-athlete who has made a major contribution to the AIC athletic program during the past academic year with outstanding ability, character, and sportsmanship.



Watts was a Northeast-10 First Team All-Conference member and a five-time NE10 Player of the Week, and reached the 1,000-point mark on February 26 in just her 61st career game. She also doubled her points per game and rebounds per game between her freshman and sophomore years. She led the East region with 22.6 points and 11.4 rebounds, totaling 18 double-doubles over the course of the season.

She was recognized nationally for her success, being named a WBCA All-American Honorable Mention and a D2CCA All-American Second Team.



The four recipients of the Robert Burke Athletic Director's Award were women's basketball senior captain **Imani Stepney**, field hockey senior captain **Elizabeth Moulton**, men's rugby senior captain **Skylar Adams** and men's ice hockey junior alternate captain **Bryant Christian**. The Burke Award recognizes community service and outstanding performance or competitive improvement over an athletic career.

Women's track and field athlete **Dana Bramble** and football player **Evan Graham** won the Lt. Alvin J. Carocari Scholarship Award, presented to the male and female athletes showing outstanding contributions to intercollegiate athletics at AIC.

The F.J. Maloney Award was given to football senior captain **Danny Omorogie** and women's soccer senior captain **Jessica Margaretta**, and is presented to the most outstanding male and female athlete throughout his or her four years at AIC.

The Yellow Jacket of the Year award was given to men's ice hockey senior captain **Austin Orszulak**, and is given to the student-athlete that best exemplifies AIC athletics in character,

# 2016-17 ATHLETIC AWARDS BANQUET



dent-Athlete of the Year awards were presented to football player **Jerrod Shelby** and cross country and track athlete **Pascaline Jerotich**.

Several academic awards were presented as well.

The SAAC Faculty Mentor Award was given to Professor **Bruce Johnson**. The award is presented to a faculty member who has represented the NCAA Division II core values of learning, passion, service, resourcefulness, sportsmanship and balance, and has exhibited "mentorship" for student-athletes and their institution.

There were four recipients of the Milton J. Piepul Merit Medal: baseball senior **Christopher Starcun**, women's soccer senior **Anais Chareyron**, men's rugby senior **Brian Lizotte** and volleyball senior **Lauren Pires**. The Piepul Medal is given to a senior who combines excellence on the field with excellence in the classroom, including a 3.5 GPA or higher.

The Alumni Award, given to women's lacrosse senior captain **Riley Brennan** and football senior captain **Daquan Holmes**, is presented to seniors who excel in both academic scholarship and athletic achievement.

talent, and spirit.

The Coach of the Year Award was given to NCAA East Region qualifier, women's soccer head coach **Kevon Isa**. It is presented to the coach that works effectively within the department and displays tremendous leadership and dedication to the growth of their sport and their student-athletes.

The class-by-class Student-Athlete of the Year awards are presented to the male and female individuals from each class that best exemplify a well-rounded student-athlete based upon the current season.

The First-Year Student-Athlete of the Year awards were given to baseball player **Matt Krause** and volleyball player **Jana Potic**.

The Second-Year Student-Athlete of the Year awards were presented to cross country and track athlete **Leakey Kipkosgei** and volleyball player **Diva Rivas-Reyes**.

The Third-Year Student-Athlete of the Year awards were presented to cross country and track athlete **Kemani Hume** and volleyball player **Mercy Rivera**.

The Fourth- and Fifth-Year Stu-





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