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WEBER STATE, SOUTHERN UTAH TIE FOR SAAC CONFERENCE CUP

OGDEN, Utah (May 2, 2014) - The Student-Athlete Advisory Committees (SAAC) from Southern Utah University and Weber State University tied for this year's Big Sky Conference SAAC Cup, the league announced Friday.

SAAC members from across the Big Sky Conference competed in a year-long competition that included three separate contests. The groups held a "Quarter Drive," solicited donations for a "School Supply Drive" and battled to accumulate the most volunteer hours from Oct. 15-April 15.

Southern Utah tallied 4,446 volunteer hours, raised $568 in the "Quarter Drive," and garnered 2,275 total points in the "School Supply Drive." Weber State led all institutions with 5,771 points in the "School Supply Drive," raised $758 in the "Quarter Drive," and registered 1,822 volunteer hours.

"This was my first year and I was extremely impressed," said Northern Colorado men's basketball player Cody McDavis, who is the Big Sky Conference SAAC President, and the league's National SAAC representative. "Some of the other schools competed very well. Montana raised more than $1,000 in the "Quarter Drive." Weber State and Southern Utah were very consistent."

Northern Colorado, the defending Conference Cup champion, totaled a league-high 5,457 volunteer hours, while Montana led the way by raising $1,310.50 in the "Quarter Drive." In all, the SAAC groups combined for more than 25,100 volunteer hours.

The money collected from the drives ($5,438.50) will be donated by the Big Sky Conference to two entities. In honor of the Big Sky's 25th anniversary of sponsoring women's sports, half of the money will be donated to the National Association of Collegiate Women Athletic Administrators (NACWAA). NACWAA is the premier leadership organization that empowers, develops, assists, celebrates, affirms, involves and honors women working in all fields of intercollegiate athletics. The other half will be donated to Samaritans Feet, which the National SAAC is working with. Samaritans Feet accepts donations in order to collect shoes that are primarily donated to Third World countries.

The Big Sky SAAC programs also combined for 12,652 points in the "School Supplies Drive." Schools were awarded one point for every dollar donated, one point for items such as a notebook, package of crayons, or a package of pencils. A backpack donation was awarded with five points.

"It's a lot of fun being able to give back," McDavis said. "It's a lot of hard work. Student-Athletes have a lot of things going on from academics, to practice to games. But when you start to give back, start to see the school supplies, or see how much money is raised in the quarter drive, and you see how it affects who it is going to, it brings great satisfaction. That's the most rewarding thing."

This is the third year the Big Sky Conference has sponsored the Conference Cup. Montana State was the inaugural winner. Northern Colorado captured the Cup last year. The winning school receives the traveling trophy. Since there was a tie this year, Weber State will gain the Cup for half of the upcoming year, while Southern Utah will hold it for the half the year.

The Big Sky SAAC is compromised of current student-athletes and serves five functions: addressing conference issues affecting student-athlete welfare, providing feedback and distributing information from the NCAA, increasing and improving student-athletes' understanding of the legislative process, promoting student-athlete participation in the legislative process, and providing a forum for addressing student-athlete concerns. The Big Sky Conference SAAC has also made it a priority to promote volunteerism in each institutions respective community.