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Wagner's Ellen Huffman and Robert Morris' Travis Denny Named 2013-14 Northeast Conference Scholar-Athletes of the Year

Somerset, NJ -- In their pursuit of academic excellence, Wagner golfer **Ellen Huffman (Lima, OH/Lima Central Catholic)** and Robert Morris tennis player **Travis Denny (Beaver Falls, PA/Blackhawk)** served as role models throughout their time as student-athletes. The recent graduates can now add one of the Northeast Conference's highest honors to their already impressive list of off-the-field accomplishments with their selection as the 2013-14 NEC Scholar-Athletes of the Year.

For each of the past eight years, the NEC and its Faculty Athletic Representatives have bestowed the honor upon the male and female student-athletes who have exhausted their athletic eligibility, graduated and compiled the highest grade point average in the Conference at the conclusion of the academic calendar. Huffman, a Business Administration major with a concentration in Accounting, posted a perfect 4.0 GPA, while Denny majored in Biology and graduated with a 3.93 GPA.

"I am in awe of what Ellen and Travis were able to accomplish in their studies while also dedicating themselves to their respective sports," said Noreen Morris, NEC Commissioner. "They epitomize what it means to be a scholar-athlete in every sense and the Northeast Conference is so proud to highlight their successes. The time management skills and work habits formed during their collegiate years will certainly carry them well into the future as they embark upon their careers."

As Wagner's Valedictorian, Huffman earned the Wagner College ECAC Merit Award, which is bestowed to the graduating senior student-athletes (male & female) with the highest cumulative GPA. She was recently selected by her peers to speak at Wagner's commencement ceremony.

The recipient of the Wagner Business Department Achievement Award last year, Huffman competed in Duff & Phelps 2013 YOUNiversity Deal Challenge, a nationwide investment banking competition for undergraduates, and served as Director of Production for Capstone, a business management simulation.

A mainstay in the Wagner women's golf lineup throughout her four-year career, Huffman served as team captain in her junior and senior years. She recorded nine top-10 finishes, while placing in the top-three on three different occasions. Huffman's career highlight came during her sophomore year when she won the 2012 Mount St. Mary's Invitational. She also registered a ninth-place finish at the 2012 NEC Championships en-route to earning first team All-NEC honors, becoming the first Seahawk to earn a spot on the All-Conference Team in six years.

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“As a 4.0 student, former All-NEC golfer and team captain, Ellen Huffman reflects all of the highest ideals of a scholar-athlete,” said Walt Hameline, Wagner Director of Athletics. “To be selected by her peers to deliver a speech at commencement, which she executed masterfully, is a tribute to the level of respect that she has earned here, and was a fitting conclusion to her Wagner experience. We at Wagner College are extremely proud of Ellen’s accomplishments and have been fortunate to have her these past four years. I’m sure she we will go on to achieve great things in the coming years.”

Recently honored with Highest GPA Award at the Robert Morris athletic banquet, Denny served as a member of the Colonial Leadership Academy and the RMU Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC). He took part various community service initiatives, including the SAAC’s annual food drive, Toys for Tots campaign and the RMU Adopt a Highway litter cleanup project.

Denny was a three-year member of the Robert Morris men’s tennis team.

“We’re extremely proud of Travis’ academic accomplishments during his time at RMU in helping him earn the NEC Scholar-Athlete of the Year,” said Craig Coleman, Robert Morris Director of Athletics. “His dedication in the classroom is an indication of the total development of the student-athlete that takes place at Robert Morris under the guidance of a number of individuals.”

NEC Scholar-Athlete of the Year History

Year	Men	Women
2013-14	Travis Denny, Robert Morris	Ellen Huffman, Wagner
2012-13	Mark Quaranta, Mount St. Mary’s	Una Japundza, Robert Morris
		Carly Thibault, Monmouth
2011-12	Michael Foster, Mount St. Mary’s	Evgeniya Tyrtova, Fairleigh Dickinson
2010-11	Sean O’Reilly, Saint Francis U	Ali Kliment, Monmouth
2009-10	Filip Kisdobranski, St. Francis Brooklyn	Maggie O’Connell Dubois, Mount St. Mary’s
2008-09	Benjamin Evenden, Monmouth	Kathleen Henry, Sacred Heart
		Tara Maxwell, Robert Morris
		Erin Reifsteck, Saint Francis U
2007-08	Ian Butcher, Saint Francis U	Katja Bavendam, St. Francis Brooklyn
2006-07	Moran Stern, St. Francis Brooklyn	Lisa Jaszka, Robert Morris
	Andrija Vrdoljak, St. Francis Brooklyn	

About The Northeast Conference

Now in its 33rd year, the Northeast Conference is an NCAA Division I collegiate athletic association consisting of 10 institutions of higher learning located throughout six states. Media coverage of the NEC extends to four of the largest markets in the United States - New York (#1), Pittsburgh (#23), Baltimore (#27), and Hartford/New Haven (#30). Founded in 1981 as the basketball-only ECAC Metro Conference, the NEC has grown to sponsor 22 championship sports for men and women and now enjoys automatic access to 14 different NCAA Championships. NEC member institutions include Bryant, Central Connecticut, Fairleigh Dickinson, LIU Brooklyn, Mount St. Mary’s, Robert Morris, Sacred Heart, St. Francis Brooklyn, Saint Francis U and Wagner. For more information on the NEC, visit the league’s official website (www.northeastconference.org) and digital network (www.necfrontrow.com), or follow the league on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Google+, all @NECsports.