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St. Francis Brooklyn's Jalen Cannon Named NEC Men's Basketball Player of the Year

Robert Morris' Marcquise Reed Tabbed NEC Rookie of the Year

St. Francis Brooklyn's Amdy Fall Voted Defensive Player of the Year Honor

Central Connecticut's Matt Mobley Selected NEC Most Improved Player

St. Francis Brooklyn's Glenn Braica Wins Jim Phelan Coach of the Year Honors

Somerset, NJ -- The madness of March is here, which means it's time to honor the best of the best from the 2014-15 NEC men's basketball season.

Landing himself square in the spotlight is St. Francis Brooklyn senior forward **Jalen Cannon (Allentown, PA/William Allen)**, who was the unanimous pick as NEC Player of the Year in a vote conducted by league head coaches.

There were two more unanimous honorees as NEC Rookie of the Year honors went to Robert Morris freshman guard **Marcquise Reed (Landover, MD/Capitol Christian)**, while St. Francis Brooklyn junior forward **Amdy Fall (New York, NY/Wings Academy)** claimed NEC Defensive Player of the Year accolades. Central Connecticut sophomore guard **Matt Mobley (Worcester, MA/Worcester Academy)** was the pick for the NEC Most Improved Player award, and for the second time in his career Jim Phelan Coach of the Year honors went to **Glenn Braica** of St. Francis Brooklyn.

The honorees were announced this morning as a prelude to the 2015 NEC Men's Basketball Tournament, which begins on Wednesday with quarterfinal play at four campus sites.

It has been a season of superlatives for Cannon, who entered St. Francis Brooklyn four years ago as an under-recruited power forward and leaves with his name etched in both his school and NEC recordbooks. A three-time All-NEC pick and two-time first team selection, Cannon eclipsed Quinnipiac's Justin Rutty to become the league's career rebound leader on February 7 and has since upped that total to 1,109 boards. Likewise, he is SFBK's all-time rebound king as well as the NCAA's active career rebound leader. Cannon's 45 lifetime double-doubles ranks him third among current DI competitors, and he is one of just two players in NEC history who have amassed 1,500 points and 1,000 rebounds in their careers. Just last week, he also became SFBK's career scoring leader and enters the postseason with 1,667 points. Along with his historical numbers, Cannon led the Terriers to their first NEC regular season title since the 2003-04 campaign and the top seed in the NEC Tournament. Serving as the team's anchor, Cannon paces the circuit with 10.2 rpg and his league-leading 18 double-doubles ties him for first on the NEC's single-season list since the league began tracking the stat in 1997-98. The Allentown, PA native and five-time NEC Player of the Week also averages 16.5 ppg, fourth in the NEC, and his 51.8 percent field goal accuracy ranks sixth on the circuit. Cannon is SFBK's third NEC Player of the Year award winner, joining Ray Minlend (1998-99) and Robert Jackson (1983-84).

(2014-15 NEC Men's Basketball All-Conference Release; 1-of-6)

Reed exploded onto the scene in November, and in the four months since, has proven to be one of the most prolific freshman shooting guards in recent NEC memory. A six-time NEC Rookie of the Week and the first freshman to earn All-NEC honors since SFU's Darshan Luckey in 2002-03, Reed scored 24 points in his second career game at North Carolina and never looked back. He leads all NEC freshman and ranks seventh in the conference in scoring at 14.9 ppg. Reed not only scores in bunches, but does it as efficiently as any guard in the conference with an elite ability to finish around the hoop. The Landover, MD product is converting at a 49.7 percent clip from the field, the seventh-best mark in the league, and is also shooting 42.4 percent from three-point range and 76.1 percent from the line. On the defensive side of the ball, Reed ranks second in the NEC with 1.9 steals per game. Former Colonials Karon Abraham (2009-10), Jeremy Chappell (2005-06) and Steve Vandiver (1986-87) have also been honored with this award.

In Fall, the Terriers possess a coveted rim protector with the ability to alter game plans with his length and shot-blocking prowess. The junior forward leads the NEC and ranks eighth nationally with 3.0 rejections per outing, including ten games with four or more blocks. Fall serves as the backbone of a St. Francis Brooklyn defense that ranks second in the NEC in scoring defense (64.3) and first in field goal percentage defense (.425). The New York City native joins Akeem Bennett (2010-11) and Greg Nunn (2000-01) as Terriers who have won the NEC Defensive Player of the Year award.

An All-Rookie pick as a freshman in 2013-14, Mobley wasted little time this season in announcing his arrival as a full-fledged star, scoring 30 points in CCSU's season opener against Fairfield. Mobley, who averaged 6.8 ppg in his first year in New Britain, lifted his scoring average over 10 points as a sophomore, the biggest jump in the conference this season. His 17.2 ppg is the third-best mark in the league, and he also ranks in third in made three-pointers (2.4/game) and 11th in free throw percentage (.756). Dangerous inside and out, Mobley has gone to the line 156 times on the year, the second-highest total in the NEC. From Worcester, MA, Mobley has also tallied a league-best four games of 30+ points this season.

In his fifth year at the helm of the St. Francis Brooklyn program, Braica guided the Terriers to their first NEC regular season title since 2003-04 and a guaranteed berth in the postseason, the first such appearance for the program since taking part in the 1963 NIT. Winners of nine of their last ten headed into the NEC Tournament, the Terriers posted a 15-3 league record to finish the regular season three games clear of the pack, the largest gap between first and second place teams since LIU Brooklyn finished three ahead of Quinnipiac in 2010-11. And with 21 wins, the Terriers are two victories shy of matching the school single-season record of 23 set back in 1953-54. Boasting NEC Player of the Year Jalen Cannon and a first-team All-NEC performer in Brent Jones, the Terriers are seeded first in the NEC Tournament for the second time in program history and have their sights set on the school's first-ever NEC title and NCAA bid. Braica previously earned NEC Coach of the Year honors during the 2011-12 season. Current assistant coach Ron Ganulin (1997-98 and 2003-04) and Rich Zvosec (1990-91) were previous SFBK recipients of the award.

Cannon, the NEC Player of the Year, is joined on the All-NEC first team by Saint Francis U senior forward **Earl Brown (Philadelphia, PA/Imhotep Charter)**, Wagner senior guard **Marcus Burton (Charlotte, NC/David W. Butler)**, St. Francis Brooklyn senior guard **Brent Jones (Brooklyn, NY/Bedford Academy)** and Bryant senior guard **Dyami Starks (Duluth, MN/Duluth East (Columbia))**

Few players in recent memory have elevated their game year-to-year to the degree that Brown has in his four seasons in Lo-retto. The NEC's Most Improved Player in 2012-13, Brown was tabbed second team All-NEC as a junior before jumping to first team status for Saint Francis U this season. One of the league's best interior scorers, the Philly native extended his range out to the three-point line this season en-route to averaging a career-best 15.8 ppg. The two-time NEC Player of the Week ranks in the NEC top-10 in five categories: scoring (fifth), rebounding (7.6, sixth), field goal percentage (.548, third), blocks (0.9, ninth) and double-doubles (11, second). With 1,322 points and 768 rebounds, Brown is in some elite historical company as one of 24 players in NEC history to reach 1,250 points and 750 boards in a career.

A key reserve in his first three years, Burton was asked by asked by Wagner head coach Bashir Mason to take on a greater scoring load on a young Seahawk team this season and the senior shooting guard did not disappoint. The NEC's second-ranked point producer heading into the postseason, Burton is averaging 17.5 ppg, including a conference-high 19.2 ppg in league play. With nearly unlimited range and a penchant for delivering in the clutch, he has posted an NEC-best 13 games of

20+ points along with three games of 30+ points. Burton also ranks fifth in the conference with 2.14 three-pointers per game. The Charlotte, NC native was a back-to-back NEC Player of the Week award winner in late January and early February, and is the league's sixth leading active scorer with 1,118 career points.

Jones makes his first All-NEC appearance after he lifted his game to an elite level for the NEC regular season champion Terriers this season. With the ability to beat his man off the dribble with ease, find his own shot and create for others, Jones set a high standard for point guards in the conference. He ended the regular season ranked 10th in the NEC in scoring (13.6) and second in assists (5.19). Jones added to his arsenal with an improved long range shot, more than doubling his made three-point total from a year ago to 42 this season. His cat-like quickness was also evident on the defensive end where the Brooklyn native leads the NEC and ranks 28th nationally with 2.0 spg. The second Terrier in school history to score 1,000 points and hand out 500 assists in a career, Jones ranks sixth all-time in the NEC with 593 career helpers.

Starks has remained a remarkably consistent offensive force in his time at Bryant and given the Bulldogs a high-volume scorer who can attack the defense in a variety of ways, most notably via his keen marksmanship from long distance. With a late season push, Starks regained the NEC scoring lead and is currently supplying Bryant with 18.5 ppg. The Duluth, MN native, who ranked first in the conference in made three-pointers as a sophomore and second as a junior, is way ahead of the pack heading into his final postseason with 90 trifectas in total and 3.10 per game (14th in DI). His 273 career triples rank ninth on the NEC's all-time list, even more remarkable when considering he only played in Smithfield for three seasons. Starks is also the NEC's top-rated free throw shooter and ranked seventh nationally, converting at an 91.1 percent clip from the stripe. The Duluth, MN product is the league's second-leading active scorer with 1,650 points.

The All-NEC second team is comprised of CCSU's **Matt Mobley (Worcester, MA/Worcester Academy)**, the NEC's Most Improved Player, and RMU's **Marcquise Reed (Landover, MD/Capitol Christian)**, the NEC's Rookie of the Year, along with Bryant sophomore forward **Dan Garvin (Bethel, CT/Bethel)**, Robert Morris senior guard/forward **Lucky Jones (Newark, NJ/St. Anthony)** and Robert Morris junior guard **Rodney Pryor (Evanston, IL/Notre Dame Prep (Cloud County CC))**.

Garvin's contributions on both ends of the floor played an enormous role in Bryant remaining in the upper echelon of the NEC standings this season. A high level athlete, Garvin supercharged his game in NEC play, averaging 12.6 ppg and 8.9 rpg while shooting 57.9 percent from the floor. On the year, he supplied the Bulldogs 11.1 ppg and ranks third in the NEC in rebounding (7.8) and fourth in blocked shots (1.5). Garvin earned his first NEC Player of the Week honor back on January 12.

One of the best players in RMU's decade-long run at or near the top of the NEC, Jones serves as the backbone of yet another Colonial team with title aspirations. In making his second consecutive All-NEC second team appearance, the versatile swingman enters the postseason averaging 14.0 ppg and a team-leading 6.3 rpg, both top-10 marks on the circuit. Jones can finish on the break, pop from long distance (50 three-pointers) and make teams pay at the line (79.3 percent). He has recorded 1,554 points and 827 rebounds in his career, making him one of just 11 players in league history to surpass 1,500 points and 800 boards. He is also one of just two NEC players (joining LIU Brooklyn's Jamal Olasewere) with 1,500 points, 800 rebounds, 150 assists and 150 steals in a career.

Pryor was just what the doctor ordered for Robert Morris after the graduation of 2013-14 NEC Player of the Year Karvel Anderson. The silky smooth sweet-shooting southpaw newcomer was named NEC Player of the Week in two of the first five weeks of his RMU career and three times on the year. After averaging 25.5 points over his last four outings, he ended the regular season as the Colonials' leading scorer with 15.3 ppg. Pryor has posted eight 20+ scoring efforts and currently ranks sixth in the NEC in scoring, second in three-point accuracy (.430) and fourth in made three-pointers (2.3/game).

The All-NEC third team consists of Mount St. Mary's sophomore guard **Byron Ashe (Washington, D.C./Friendship Collegiate)**, Mount St. Mary's junior forward **Gregory Graves (Sterling, VA/Potomac Falls)**, Sacred Heart senior guard **Evan Kelley (Norwalk, CT/Norwalk)**, LIU Brooklyn senior guard **Gerrell Martin (Bronx, NY/Wings Academy)** and Bryant senior guard **Joe O'Shea (Burlington, VT/Burlington (Holy Cross))**.

It's no coincidence that Ashe's emergence as a legitimate scoring and outside shooting threat gave Mount St. Mary's the spark it needed this season as the team looked to fill the void left by the graduation of three 1,000-point scorers. The Mount is 5-0 this season in games in which Ashe has scored 20+ points and over the last five games of the regular season, the Washington, D.C. product averaged 21.0 ppg to lift his season average to a team-best 12.0 ppg. The 6'1" guard also leads the Mount with 52 three-pointers on the year.

A much-improved offensive contributor this season, Graves handles much of the dirty work inside for the Mount and its "Mayhem" approach. The 6'7", 235 lb. forward lifted his scoring average from 6.5 ppg as a sophomore to 10.4 ppg over the course of the regular season, while leading the team with 7.5 rpg, a mark that ranks seventh in the conference. Graves was at his best in NEC play, where he averaged 12.0 ppg and 8.2 rpg, including six double-digit scoring efforts in his last eight games.

Kelley is as versatile as they come, and the elevation in his game as a senior was a key factor in Sacred Heart's resurgence this season. With a solid mid-range game, and the ability to attack the rim and finish on the break, Kelley is a dangerous offensive threat for the Pioneers. He ranks tenth in the NEC with 10.6 ppg, and also supplies 4.0 rpg and 2.3 apg. A solid on-the-ball defender, he leads SHU with 37 steals on the season. The Norwalk, CT native is the fifth-leading active scorer in the NEC with 1,179 career points.

The proud owner of two NEC championship rings, Martin not only supplied LIU Brooklyn with a sweet strokes from outside, but also provided senior leadership on a young Blackbird squad over the course of the regular season. Martin currently leads a balanced LIU scoring effort with 11.4 ppg. He paces the Blackbirds with 52 three-pointers and his 1.8 trifectas per game is the ninth-best mark in the conference. Martin also ranks fourth in the NEC in three-point accuracy (.393) and free throw percentage (.819).

There is a smoothness to O'Shea's game that is undeniable, whether it is his picture perfect lefty stroke from distance or his ability to glide through traffic and attack the rim. The Burlington, VT stepped up his game as a senior, averaging 10.3 ppg, 5.8 rpg and 2.3 apg for third-seeded Bryant. An efficient offensive player, he shoots 46.9 percent from the floor and has made 30 three-pointers at a 37.5 percent clip. The fundamentally sound 6'4" guard also turned the ball over just 36 times all season.

The next generation of NEC stars could come from the five freshmen selected to the All-Rookie squad. Joining NEC Rookie of the Year **Marcquise Reed (Landover, MD/Capitol Christian)** of Robert Morris are Sacred Heart guard **Cane Broome (East Hartford, CT/East Hartford (St. Thomas More))**, LIU Brooklyn guard **Martin Hermannsson (Reykjavik, Iceland/Reykjavik)**, Mount St. Mary's freshman guard **Junior Robinson (Mebane, NC/Eastern Alamance)** and LIU Brooklyn forward **Nura Zanna (Kaduna, Nigeria/Coral Springs Christian (FL))**.

Broome wasted little time making a huge impact for a much-improved Sacred Heart team. A five-time NEC Rookie of the Week, he leads Sacred Heart in scoring at 14.2 ppg, a figure that ranks second among NEC freshman and eighth in the conference. An all-around performer who will often find the ball in his hands late in the game, Broome also averages 3.8 rpg and 2.4 apg, and has hit 42 shots from three-point range. On December 8, he became just the third freshman in league history to be named NEC Player of the Week.

Part of the new wave talent that arrived at LIU Brooklyn this past fall, Hermannsson's demeanor and poise on the court is more reminiscent of an upperclassman than a freshman. The versatile Icelandic import ranks fourth among NEC freshman with 10.2 ppg, and also contributes 3.9 rpg and 3.3 apg. A knockdown shooter from the line, Hermannsson has converted 86.0 percent of his attempts from the stripe to rank third in the league. He was twice tabbed NEC Rookie of the Week.

Robinson may only measure 5'5", but he has already has proven to be a big time player for the Mount after assuming the starting point guard spot from game one. Fearless taking the ball to the rim and one of the quickest players in recent NEC memory, Robinson averages 8.2 ppg and paces the Mount with 3.3 apg. He has also hit 32 shots from beyond the arc.

Zanna has all the makings to be a dominant frontcourt fixture for LIU Brooklyn over the next three seasons. With a variety of post moves, the 6'7", 240 lb. forward gave opponents all they could handle in the paint, averaging 8.5 points over the course

of the regular season for the Blackbirds. Zanna, a two-time NEC Rookie of the Week, leads LIU and ranks in the NEC top-10 in both rebounding (6.2) and field goal percentage (.473).

About The Northeast Conference

Now in its 34th 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.

2014-15 Northeast Conference Men's Basketball Award Winners

Player of the Year

Jalen Cannon St. Francis Brooklyn F 6-6 235 Sr Allentown, PA/William Allen

Rookie of the Year

Marcquise Reed Robert Morris G 6-3 180 Fr Landover, MD/Capitol Christian

Defensive Player of the Year

Amdy Fall St. Francis Brooklyn F 6-7 220 Jr New York, NY/Wings Academy

Most Improved Player

Matt Mobley CCSU G 6-3 175 So Worcester, MA/Worcester Academy

Jim Phelan Coach of the Year

Glenn Braica St. Francis Brooklyn

2014-15 Northeast Conference Men's Basketball First Team All-Conference

Name	School	Pos	Ht	Wt	Yr	Hometown/High School (Previous School)
Earl Brown	Saint Francis U	F	6-6	206	Sr	Philadelphia, PA/Imhotep Charter
Marcus Burton	Wagner	G	6-0	170	Sr	Charlotte, NC/David W. Butler
Jalen Cannon	St. Francis Brooklyn	F	6-6	235	Sr	Allentown, PA/William Allen
Brent Jones	St. Francis Brooklyn	G	5-10	170	Sr	Brooklyn, NY/Bedford Academy
Dyami Starks	Bryant	G	6-2	195	Sr	Duluth, MN/Duluth East (Columbia)

2014-15 Northeast Conference Men's Basketball Second Team All-Conference

Name	School	Pos	Ht	Wt	Yr	Hometown/High School (Previous School)
Dan Garvin	Bryant	F	6-6	215	So	Bethel, CT/Bethel
Lucky Jones	Robert Morris	G/F	6-6	210	Sr	Newark, NJ/St. Anthony
Matt Mobley	CCSU	G	6-3	175	So	Worcester, MA/Worcester Academy
Rodney Pryor	Robert Morris	G	6-5	205	Jr	Evanston, IL/Notre Dame Prep (Cloud County CC)
Marcquise Reed	Robert Morris	G	6-3	180	Fr	Landover, MD/Capitol Christian

2014-15 Northeast Conference Men's Basketball Third Team All-Conference

Name	School	Pos	Ht	Wt	Yr	Hometown/High School (Previous School)
Byron Ashe	Mount St. Mary's	G	6-1	170	So	Washington, D.C./Friendship Collegiate
Gregory Graves	Mount St. Mary's	F	6-7	235	Jr	Sterling, VA/Potomac Falls
Evan Kelley	Sacred Heart	G	6-4	185	Sr	Norwalk, CT/Norwalk
Gerrell Martin	LIU Brooklyn	G	6-3	185	Sr	Bronx, NY/Wings Academy
Joe O'Shea	Bryant	G	6-4	195	Sr	Burlington, VT/Burlington (Holy Cross)

2014-15 Northeast Conference Men's Basketball All-Rookie Team

Name	School	Pos	Ht	Wt	Yr	Hometown/High School (Previous School)
Cane Broome	Sacred Heart	G	6-0	150	Fr	East Hartford, CT/East Hartford (St. Thomas More)
Martin Hermannsson	LIU Brooklyn	G	6-3	170	Fr	Reykjavik, Iceland/Reykjavik
Marcquise Reed	Robert Morris	G	6-3	180	Fr	Landover, MD/Capitol Christian
Junior Robinson	Mount St. Mary's	G	5-5	165	Fr	Mebane, NC/Eastern Alamance
Nura Zanna	LIU Brooklyn	F	6-7	240	Fr	Kaduna, Nigeria/Coral Springs Christian (FL)