NSIC Announces 2020 Britton and Kelly Award Recipients

BURNSVILLE, Minn. — The Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC) announced Minnesota State University, Mankato’s Alex Goettl as the 2020 Dr. William Britton Scholar-Athlete Award winner and Minnesota State University, Mankato’s Maggie Knier as the 2020 Willis R. Kelly Scholar-Athlete Award recipient. The Britton Scholar-Athlete Award for Academic Excellence, in its 36th year, recognizes the NSIC’s top male student-athlete and the Kelly Scholar-Athlete Award, in its 35th year, is presented to the NSIC’s top female student-athlete.

The Britton Award was created in 1985 in honor of Dr. William Britton, a longtime faculty representative at Bemidji State University who served on the Athletic Board of Control of the Northern Intercollegiate Conference for 25 years. Britton retired from BSU in 1982 and passed away in March of 2019.

The Kelly Award is named in honor of Willis R. Kelly, an associate professor of physical education at the University of Minnesota-Morris. A member of the NSIC Hall of Fame, Kelly also coordinated the Minnesota-Morris Physical Education Department from 1970-87. She became the first director of women’s intercollegiate athletics at Minnesota-Morris in 1976 and was later promoted to athletics director for the whole department. Kelly passed away in 1988.

The member institutions of the NSIC nominate one male and one female student-athlete for the Britton and Kelly Awards. The nominees must meet the following criteria: a grade point average of 3.5 or better (on a 4.0 scale); evidence of academic excellence beyond the minimum grade point average (scholarship prizes and other academic recognition), evidence of participation in the life of the institution, and evidence of participation in at least two-thirds of the varsity events of the individual’s primary sport. The award is voted on by the NSIC Faculty Athletic Representatives.

The 32 student-athletes nominated for the NSIC’s two most prestigious awards will also be honored as NSIC Male and Female Honor Student-Athletes of the Year at their respective institutions. Goettl and Knier will each receive a $3,000 post-graduate scholarship.

**2020 Dr. William Britton Scholar-Athlete Award for Academic Excellence**

Alex Goettl - Minnesota State University, Mankato - Football

Goettl is a 2019 William V. Campbell Trophy Finalist and was recognized as one of the top 12 scholar-athletes in the nation (all levels) for combined academic success, athletic performance and exemplary leadership. He earned an NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship and was a multiple time CoSIDA Academic All-District and All-American member. NSIC honors included the Glen Galligan Outstanding Senior Athlete Award, the Myles Brand All-Academic with Distinction Award, the Elite 18 Award, as well as being named to the NSIC All-Academic Team of Excellence multiple times. At MSU he graduated Summa Cum Laude while earning multiple scholarships, including the MSU Presidential Scholarship, the MSU Alumni Legacy Scholarship and the MSU Biology Department Scholarship, to name a few. He was also honored as the Stein-Fallon Scholar Athlete by the Minnesota Chapter of the National Football Foundation.

On campus, Goettl was a member of the Pre-Physician Assistant Club and was a Chemistry Lab Teaching Assistant.

On the field, the linebacker played in 53 of MSU’s 54 games during the last four seasons, including 42 starts. He recorded 205 career tackles, including 20.5 tackles for a loss and 7.5 sacks. He also intercepted five passes and recovered four fumbles. As a junior he led the Maverick defense with 87 tackles. This past season Goettl recorded 48 tackles, 2.5 tackles for loss with one sack and two interceptions as he helped the Mavericks to the NCAA Division II National Championship game.

Goettl has been actively involved in the community during his time as a Maverick having assisted with the Kiwanis Holiday Lights setup, Echo Food Shelf volunteer, science fair judge volunteer, Mankato LEEP softball coach, Climb for Kids volunteer, served as a certified nursing assistant at Oak Terrace assisted living and as a member of the Minnesota State Football steering committee.

“Alex will be one of the most decorated student-athletes in the history of Mavericks Football with the addition of this award. Alex is the most kindhearted and mild mannered human that has faced adversity and difficult events in his life. Shining with an outstanding work ethic and passion for life and athletics while making all of the necessary lifestyle sacrifices to maximize his fullest potential. Alex is the most well rounded student-athlete that I have ever coached and his legacy at MSU will be cherished forever,” said MSU Head Football Coach Todd Hoffner.

“Alex Goettl is an outstanding student, outstanding athlete and outstanding citizen of our community. He is humble, yet passionate about all that he pursues. He represents the best of the best of the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference student-athletes,” stated MSU Faculty Athletic Representative Jeff Pribyl.

2020 Willis R. Kelly Scholar-Athlete Award for Academic Excellence on Next Page
Maggie Knier, a native of Big Lake, Minnesota, graduated Summa Cum Laude with a major in marketing and a minor in mass media at Minnesota State University, Mankato. The homeschooled product holds a 4.00 grade point average while excelling in swimming for the Mavericks. Knier joins Kendra Heuttl (2012) as the only student-athletes from Minnesota State to earn the NSIC Kelly Award.

Knier made the Dean’s list every semester at MSU while earning the Morgan I. and Marjorie J. Thomas College of Business Endowed Scholarship, the Elmer T. and Nina C. Anderson Endowed Scholarship and was a three-time NSIC Elite 18 Award recipient. She also earned the NSIC Myles Brand Award for Academic Excellence and was a Delta Sigma Pi Scholarship Key recipient, which is presented to the graduating student at an institution with the highest cumulative academic average toward a degree in business administration or economics. She earned CSCAA Scholar All-American honors and CoSIDA Academic All-American Second Team accolades. She also earned NSIC All-Academic Team of Excellence honors twice.

On campus, Knier was a member of Delta Sigma Pi (DSP) professional business fraternity. She has served as Senior Vice President, Vice President of Media Communications, Social Chair, Homecoming Chair, and Spring Events Chair. She participated in several community service events a semester through DSP such as Adopt-a-Highway, Echo Food shelf and writing cards to veterans. She volunteered for Kiwanis lights, was a coach for Girls on the Run Mankato and was an intern in the marketing department at MSU, helping to run all of the University’s social media accounts.

In the pool, Knier was a member of the 200 freestyle relay team that finished third at the NSIC Championships her senior year. She also took fourth place in the 100 freestyle at the NSIC Championships and was 11th in the 50 freestyle. She also swam on the 200 and 400 medley relay teams that took first place at the UW-Stevens Point Invite. As a junior she claimed All-NSIC honors in the 200 medley relay, 400 medley relay and the 100 freestyle and then went on to compete in both the 50 freestyle and the 100 freestyle at the NCAA Championships. As a freshman she received All-American honors as a member of the 200 freestyle relay team that finished in third place at the NCAA Championships. Knier is the first swimmer to earn CoSIDA Academic All-American honors at MSU.

Knier also operates her own small business named 2True Headbands and last year she participated in several entrepreneurship competitions. She won MSU’s Big Ideas Challenge, qualified as a division finalist and received third in the statewide Minnesota Cup Entrepreneurship competition and was runner-up in Southern MN’s Entrepreneurial Bridge competition.

“Maggie has made a tremendous impact to our program throughout her career at Minnesota State. As an athlete, she leaves here as a Conference Champion, National Qualifier, NCAA All-American, and Academic All-American. Maggie has helped our team achieve new levels of success and finishes her career as one of the fastest sprinters in school history. In the classroom Maggie has been an unparalleled student, she has maintained a perfect 4.0 GPA majoring in marketing and minoring in mass media. In addition to being an outstanding student, Maggie has been an excellent teammate and member of our University community during the past four years. She’ll be the CEO of a fortune 500 company someday. We are extremely proud of Maggie and for everything that she as accomplished,” said MSU Head Swimming Coach Nathan Owens.

“Maggie Knier represents the best in terms of academics, athletics and community involvement. She pursues her passion while helping those along the way. She is model of what the Kelly Award is designed to honor,” stated MSU Faculty Athletic Representative Jeff Pribyl.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Yr.</th>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
<th>High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Kelvington</td>
<td>Augustana University</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Wrestling</td>
<td>Jordan, Minn.</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Derek Thompson</td>
<td>Bemidji State University</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Cold Spring, Minn.</td>
<td>Rocori</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cole Oslin</td>
<td>Concordia University, St. Paul</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>CC/Track &amp; Field</td>
<td>Mora, Minn.</td>
<td>Mora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonardo Vecchi</td>
<td>University of Mary</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>Bergamo, Italy</td>
<td>S.B. Capitанию</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor Long Jr.</td>
<td>University of Minnesota Crookston</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>Brooklyn Park, Minn.</td>
<td>Champlin Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Monson</td>
<td>University of Minnesota Duluth</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>Inver Grove Heights, Minn.</td>
<td>Rosemount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex Goettl</td>
<td>Minnesota State University, Mankato</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>Mankato, Minn.</td>
<td>Mankato West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethan Gerbig</td>
<td>Minnesota State University Moorhead</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>De Pere, Wis.</td>
<td>De Pere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carson Harcourt</td>
<td>Minot State University</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>Kipling, Sask.</td>
<td>Kipling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zachary Mohs</td>
<td>Northern State University</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>Horace, N.D.</td>
<td>West Fargo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Cooney</td>
<td>University of Sioux Falls</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>Pickstown, S.D.</td>
<td>Andes Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick Dufault</td>
<td>Southwest Minnesota State University</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Waseca, Minn.</td>
<td>Waseca Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Solberg</td>
<td>St. Cloud State University</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>Cambridge, Minn.</td>
<td>Cambridge-Isanti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas Baumlmer</td>
<td>Upper Iowa University</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>Wrestling</td>
<td>West Union, Iowa</td>
<td>North Fayette Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethan Knudson</td>
<td>Wayne State College</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>Harlan, Iowa</td>
<td>Harlan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick Prigeon</td>
<td>Winona State University</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>Wauwatosa, Wis.</td>
<td>Wauwatosa East</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### 2019-20 NSIC Men's Honor Student-Athlete Award Winners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Yr.</th>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
<th>High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abby Hora</td>
<td>Augustana University</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Viborg, S.D.</td>
<td>Viborg-Hurley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tia Neuharth</td>
<td>Bemidji State University</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>Prior Lake, Minn.</td>
<td>Prior Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah Pavek</td>
<td>Concordia University, St. Paul</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>Eagan, Minn.</td>
<td>Eagan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breanna Donarski</td>
<td>University of Mary</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>Powell, Wyo.</td>
<td>Powell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paige Piteck</td>
<td>University of Minnesota Crookston</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Softball/Cross Country</td>
<td>Jordan, Minn.</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily (Torve) Balts</td>
<td>University of Minnesota Duluth</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>Loretto, Minn.</td>
<td>Heritage Christian Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Krier</td>
<td>Minnesota State University, Mankato</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>Big Lake, Minn.</td>
<td>Homeschooled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Hintz</td>
<td>Minnesota State University Moorhead</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Rochester Minn.</td>
<td>Dover-Eyota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kailyn Hill</td>
<td>Minot State University</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>Bowman, N.D.</td>
<td>Bowman County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brianna Kusler</td>
<td>Northern State University</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Aberdeen, S.D.</td>
<td>Aberdeen Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacey Huinker</td>
<td>University of Sioux Falls</td>
<td>Gr.</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Altoona, Iowa</td>
<td>Southeast Polk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma Grote</td>
<td>Southwest Minnesota State University</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Softball</td>
<td>Blair, Neb.</td>
<td>Blair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madison Brinkman</td>
<td>St. Cloud State University</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>Swimming &amp; Diving</td>
<td>Grey Eagle, Minn.</td>
<td>Melrose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brinn Grunder</td>
<td>Upper Iowa University</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Track &amp; Field</td>
<td>Durant, Iowa</td>
<td>Durant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophia Ketchmark</td>
<td>Wayne State College</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>La Vista, Neb.</td>
<td>Omaha Gross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alison Nowak</td>
<td>Winona State University</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Softball</td>
<td>New Berlin, Wis.</td>
<td>Eisenhower</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Annual Britton Award Recipients

- 2020 - Alex Goettl, Minnesota State
- 2019 - Kirby Hora, Augustana
- 2018 - Carter McCaulty, Winona State
- 2017 - Joe Gomez, Northern State
- 2016 - Matt Horan, Sioux Falls
- 2015 - Kowan O’Keefe, Minot State
- 2014 - William Brockmueller, Sioux Falls
- 2013 - Alex Couler, Winona State
- 2012 - Cody Lensing, Augustana
- 2011 - Matt Braithwaite, Augustana
- 2010 - Marcus Greatens, Winona State
- 2009 - Kirk Ingram, Concordia-St. Paul
- 2008 - Tyler Fischer, Southwest Minnesota State
- 2007 - Tyler Fischer, Southwest Minnesota State
- 2006 - Dusty Smith, Wayne State
- 2005 - Brett Watson, Wayne State
- 2004 - Baron Blanchard, Northern State
- 2003 - Tucker Willard, Northern State
- 2002 - Steven Brandt, Minnesota Crookston
- 2001 - Mike May, Bemidji State
- 2000 - Adam Vossen, MSU Moorhead
- 1999 - Bart Johnson, MSU Moorhead
- 1998 - Stephen Blackmarr, Minnesota Duluth
- 1997 - Jesse Beckerman, Minnesota Duluth
- 1996 - Lance Luitjens, Northern State
- 1995 - Nate Gruber, Winona State
- 1994 - Jeff Engbrecht, Winona State
- 1993 - Jay Kusler, Northern State
- 1992 - Jeff Welder, MSU Moorhead
- 1991 - Scott Colbeck, Minnesota-Morris
- 1990 - Dwight Hager, Bemidji State
- 1989 - Bruce Sagedahl, Southwest State
- 1988 - Tom Aney, Minnesota Duluth
- 1987 - Dale Harper, Bemidji State
- 1986 - Jeff Kretchman, Northern State
- 1985 - James Scott Bestul, Winona State

**Italicized=Recipients from same institution that year**

### Annual Kelly Award Recipients

- 2020 - Maggie Krier, Minnesota State
- 2019 - Anna Winter, Upper Iowa
- 2018 - Miranda Ristau, Northern State
- 2017 - Sasha Howind, Northern State
- 2016 - Claire Sames, Southwest Minnesota State
- 2015 - Whitney Burmeister, Southwest Minnesota State
- 2014 - Rachel Patnoe, Southwest Minnesota State
- 2013 - Elizabeth (Ellie) Duffy, Concordia-St. Paul
- 2012 - Kendra Heuttl, Minnesota State
- 2011 - Rebecca Anderson, Minnesota Duluth
- 2010 - Lauren Brown, Winona State
- 2009 - Mary Slinger, Concordia-St. Paul
- 2008 - Kallie Tellefsen, Winona State
- 2007 - Jessica Trautwein, MSU Moorhead
- 2006 - Kathryn Kramer, Winona State
- 2005 - Lindsay Hartmann, MSU Moorhead
- 2004 - Kristin Peterson, Northern State
- 2003 - Karen Darveaux, Winona State
- 2002 - Christie Kubat, Southwest State
- 2001 - Angela Swanson, Minnesota Crookston
- 2000 - Abby Stritesky, Bemidji State
- 1999 - Janelle Gibbs, Southwest State
- 1998 - Betsy Pachal, Minnesota Duluth
- 1997 - Mollie Odell, Northern State
- 1996 - Paige Karno, Southwest State
- 1995 - Katy Pivec, Southwest State
- 1994 - Amy Tenute, MSU Moorhead
- 1993 - Amy Erickson, Minnesota Duluth
- 1992 - Kristin Nelson, Minnesota Duluth
- 1991 - Jayne Dusich, Bemidji State
- 1990 - Mary Kortan, Northern State
- 1989 - Shauna Wendland, Southwest State
- 1988 - Tara Haaken, Minnesota Duluth
- 1987 - Tessa Greenwood, MSU Moorhead & Patricia Fleske, Southwest State
- 1986 - Lisa Muehlbauer, Minnesota Duluth

**Italicized=Recipients from same institution that year**