Finalists for Ken B. Jones Award announced

ESU, PSU each have two finalists among the six invited to June 5 awards dinner

(OVERLAND PARK, Kan.) — Emporia State University and Pittsburg State University had both their men’s and women’s nominees among the finalists for the Ken B. Jones Awards as MIAA Student-Athletes of the Year.

This marks the 10th year for the award. It is named in honor of the man who served as the MIAA’s first full-time commissioner for 16 years, before retiring in 1997.

One male and one female are selected for the honors, with the finalists invited to the MIAA Awards Banquet, set for June 5 in Kansas City at the Downtown Marriott Muehlebach Tower.

Emporia State, a school which has had three women’s winners in the past nine years, will be represented by senior track & field heptathlete Sarah Wuertz and senior football strong safety Dontaye McCoy.

Pittsburg State, which has had five Ken B. Jones winners (three women’s, two men’s) will be represented by senior football free safety Aaron Hight and junior cross country/track & field runner Abbey Block.

Rounding out the nominees are junior tennis player Mark Eori (pronounced ee-OR-ee) of Southwest Baptist University, and senior freestyle swimmer Liz Hug of Truman State University.

An 11-member panel of athletics directors, sports information directors, senior women’s administrators, and faculty athletics representatives — including a representative from each school — selects the winners.

Judging is done in four areas for each nominee, 2002-03 Athletic Accomplishments, 2002-03 Academic Accomplishments, 2002-03 Campus/Community Service and Career Athletic, Academic and Service Achievements.

To be nominated, a student-athlete must have a 3.00 cumulative grade-point average as of April 1, and complete at least their junior season of eligibility in the 2002-03 academic year.

Men’s Finalists
Mark Eori
Junior • Southwest Baptist
Tennis • Gyor, Hungary
Economics/finance & international business major
3.78 Cumulative GPA

2002-03 Athletics Accomplishments: Intercollegiate Tennis Association Division II National Doubles Champion (with Andras Bori)... Men’s team captain... Member of the MIAA Champion Tennis Team... Member of the NCAA Division II North Central Regional Champion Team... Member of the SBU team that reached the Elite Eight this spring... First Team All-MIAA... MIAA Player of the Week... Received a Missouri Sports Hall of Fame Accomplishment Award... Currently ranked by ITA No. 3 in the nation in doubles with partner Andras Bori (Top 10 named All-American)... Was 26-2 this season in doubles, 4-0 in MIAA... Was 18-1 in singles this season, 5-0 in MIAA... Currently ranked No. 22 in

the nation in singles... Currently ranked No. 1 in the region in doubles... Currently ranked No. 2 in the region in singles.

2002-03 Academic Accomplishments: Dean’s Scholarship... President’s List... MIAA Commissioner’s Academic Honor Roll... Academic All-MIAA.

2002-03 Campus/Community Service: Volunteer for Share Your Christmas program... Volunteers at Intervention Ministries... Helped with MIAA Canned Food Drive... Helps teach tennis to local youth.

Career Athletic, Academic and Service Accomplishments: ITA Division II All-American... Two-time All-MIAA selection... MIAA Player of the Week twice... MIAA Tennis Sportsmanship Award nominee... Was ranked No. 17 and 22 in singles in both his freshman and sophomore seasons... Was named the ITA Division II Midwest Region Newcomer of the Year in 2001... Has been a
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member of the President's list several times... Has helped with the MIAA Canned Food Drive for three seasons... Multiple Commissioner's Academic Honor Roll honors... Twice named Academic All-MIAA.

Aaron Hight
Senior • Pittsburg State
Football • Riverton, Kan.
Construction management major
3.75 cumulative GPA

2002-03 Athletic Accomplishments: First-team All-MIAA selection as a defensive back for the Gorillas... Second-team All-Region selection on both the Daktronics/NCAA Division II and the Football Gazette All-Midwest Region squads... Led the PSU defense with 75 tackles despite missing the final 11 quarters of the season due to a season-ending knee injury suffered early in the first quarter vs. Truman on Nov. 2, 2002... Also had one interception that he returned for a 47-yard touchdown, one pass breakup and one blocked kick on the season... A strong All-America candidate prior to suffering the knee injury that cut his season short by nearly three full games... Selected to compete in 2003 Whataburger Cactus Bowl (Division II All-Star Bowl).

2002-03 Academic Accomplishments: A second-team Verizon Academic All-America selection... A member of the MIAA Commissioner’s Academic Honor Roll... Will be named to the Academic All-MIAA Team later this spring... Earned Dean’s Scholastic Honors (3.6 GPA or higher) during the Fall 2002 semester... Received Sunflower Award as the PSU football senior with the highest GPA.

2002-03 Campus/Community Service: A member of the PSU chapter Fellowship of Christian Athletes... President of Sigma Lambda Chi construction honor society... Member of the PSU Honors Society... A member of the PSU Choir... An actor for Cherokee County (Kan.) Performing Arts Society... American Cancer Society Relay for Life volunteer... Active member of Riverton Friends Church... Volunteer for Association of General Contractors’ Hearts & Hammers... Volunteer for Friends Disaster Relief Program... Chairman of Riverton Friends Building Project... Volunteer for American Rehabilitation Ministries... Volunteer Children’s Miracle Network fund-raisers.

Career Athletic, Academic and Service Accomplishments: A two-time first-team All-MIAA selection (2001-02)... Two-time All-Region selection from Daktronics/NCAA Division II, earning first-team honors in 2001 and second-team honors in 2002... Recorded 215 career tackles... A two-time first-team Verizon Academic All-District VII selection (2001-02)... A three-year member of the MIAA Commissioner’s Academic Honor Roll and a two-year member of the MIAA All-Academic Team... A multiple-year volunteer for the American Cancer Society Relay for Life, American Rehabilitation Ministries and the Children’s Miracle Network fund-raisers.

Dontaye McCoy
Senior • Emporia State
Football • Wichita, Kan.
Sociology major • 3:30 cumulative GPA

2002-03 Athletic Accomplishments: MIAA Defensive Player of the Year... First-Team All-MIAA... First-Team All-Midwest Region by CoSIDA, D2Football.com and Football Gazette... Was one of four consensus First-Team All-Americans in Division II... Named First-Team AP Little All-American, AFCA, CoSIDA, D2Football.com, and Football Gazette... Was the only defensive player to be named a Midwest Region candidate for the Harlon Hill Trophy... Fumble recovery vs. PSU led to ESU’s first points and his league-leading fourth forced fumble stopped a Gorilla drive that began on the ESU 18-yard line... Ranked 20th in the nation in forced fumbles... Blocked an extra point against Washburn... Had a team-high seven tackles in ESU’s Mineral Water Bowl victory... Had an interception and five tackles at the Whataburger Cactus Bowl Division II All-Star game... ESU’s Outstanding Male Student-Athlete.

2002-03 Academic Accomplishments: Named Verizon Academic All-District Second-Team... ESU Athletic Director’s Honor Roll... MIAA Commissioner’s Academic Honor Roll... Had 3.54 GPA during fall semester.

2002-03 Campus/Community Service: Visited with patients at the KU Medical Center prior to the Mineral Water Bowl... Volunteered with Special Olympics... Has helped put on sports clinics for local elementary schools.

Career Athletic, Academic and Service Accomplishments: First Hornet football player to earn at least second-team All-MIAA all four years (2nd-team in 1999, 1st-team in 2000, 2001 and 2002)... Three-time All-American... Led MIAA in interceptions as a sophomore and forced fumbles as a junior and senior... Was one interception shy of Kelly Nusser’s school record of 14 picks with his interception of a two-point conversion pass against SBU not counting in the career records... His 341 career tackles rank second at ESU since the Hornets joined the MIAA.

Women’s Nominees
Abbey Block
Senior • Pittsburg State
Cross Country/Track & Field • Clay Center, Kan.
Biology (pre-medicine) major • 4.00 cumulative GPA

2002-03 Athletic Accomplishments: Earned NCAA Division II All-America honors in the 1,500 meters 2003 Outdoor Championships, placing sixth (4:33.21)... Two-time MIAA champion in outdoor track & field, capturing conference titles in the 800 meters (2:14.24) and the 1,500 meters (4:46.65)... Established a new PSU record in the 800 meters at the ESU Last Chance Meet on May 9 (2:12.33)... Earned All-MIAA honors in indoor track & field, finishing as the MIAA runner-up in the mile run (5:01.23)... Earned All-MIAA honors in cross country, helping PSU to its second straight MIAA title with a ninth-place finish in the six-kilometer race (22:35)... Placed seventh overall at the NCAA-II South Central Regional (23:35), helping PSU claim the team title and a berth to the NCAA-II National Championships... Placed 50th overall at the NCAA-II Championships (23:20), helping Pittsburg State
place 13th among 23 competing schools.

2002-03 Academic Accomplishments: A member of the MIAA Commissioner’s Academic Honor Roll in cross country and track & field... Qualifies for the Academic All-MIAA Team, to be announced later this spring... Currently under consideration for Verison Academic All-America honors this spring... Expected to earn MIAA Presidential Scholar honors for a third straight year, upon the conclusion of the Spring 2003 semester... Earned Presidential (All-A) honors during the Fall 2002 academic semester... Completing third year as a member of PSU’s prestigious Honors College.

2002-03 Campus/Community Service: Served as an University Student Ambassador... Member of Tri Beta biology honor society... Member of Phi Happa Phi leadership society... Member of Omicron Delta Kappa leadership and service society... Member of the PSU Pre-Med Club... Served on Cross Quest student leadership staff... A volunteer at Pittsburg Free Medical Clinic... Volunteer for Discovery Jesus (Christian outreach ministry for children)... Volunteer for HOSTS mentoring program (Help One Student To Succeed)... Southeast Kansas Special Olympics volunteer... American Cancer Society Relay for Life volunteer... Volunteer for PSU Annual Phonathon Drive... PSU Biology Bowl official... Vacation Bible School teacher... First Baptist Church nursery volunteer... Member First Baptist Church choir.

Career Athletic, Academic & Service Accomplishments: A seven-time All-MIAA team and field performer... Two-time MIAA track & field champion... Three-time All-MIAA cross country performer... Two-year selection to the MIAA Commissioner’s Academic Honor Roll, the MIAA All-Academic Team and a two-year MIAA Presidential Scholar... Has earned Presidential (All-A) honors in all five semesters at PSU... Multiple-year volunteer for PSU Phonathon, SEK Special Olympics, American Cancer Society Relay for Life and HOSTS mentoring program, as well as multiple-year vacation bible school teacher and church nursery volunteer.

Liz Hug
Senior • Truman
Swimming • Maryville, Ill.
Nursing major • 3.86 Cumulative GPA

2002-03 Athletic Accomplishments: A significant contributor on Truman’s third-straight NCAA Division II National Champion Women’s swimming team... Became a four-year and 12-time national champion after winning the 1,000-yard freestyle and 200-yard individual medley, and as part of the winning 800-yard freestyle relay squad... Also part of the NCAA-record setting and champion 400-medley relay and 400-yard freestyle relay teams in 2003... Became a four-year and 28-time all-America after also placing second in the 500-yard freestyle and fourth in the 200-yard freestyle as Truman won by the largest margin in DII history... Completed her career as the Truman record-holder in the 200-yard individual medley and as part of the 400- and 800-yard freestyle relay and 400-yard medley relay teams... Named Truman Outstanding Senior Woman Student-Athlete of the Year

2002-03 Academic Accomplishments: Winner of an NCAA postgraduate scholarship... One of 10 NCAA D-II finalists for NACDA postgraduate scholarship... Became a four-time College Swimming Coaches Association Academic All-American... A three-time MIAA commissioner’s academic honor roll member... Eligible for her fourth straight Academic All-MIAA honors... A repeat selection to the Verizon first-team academic all-district list and currently under consideration for second-straight naming to the Verison academic all-America contingent.

2002-03 Campus/Community Service: Sigma Kappa social sorority... Captain of the swim team... Coaches summer youth swim league for ages 5-18... Will coach for the swim team in fall of 2003.

Career Athletic, Academic and Service Accomplishments: As a junior, she was the national champion and NCAA record-setter in the 200-yard individual medley and won the 500-yard freestyle at nationals as well... A member of Truman’s last three national champion 800-yard freestyle relay teams... Part of three national champion and NCAA record-setting relay teams (400-yard medley and 400- and 800-yard freestyle) as a junior... As a freshman, Hug was a member of the national championship 200-yard freestyle relay squad... Posted national runner-up finishes in the 200-yard freestyle as a junior; in the 200-yard medley relay as a sophomore; and as part of the 400-yard freestyle relay her freshman season... Other top 10 national finishes include placing third in the 1,000-yard freestyle as a junior; placing sixth in the 200 IM and 100 butterfly, seventh in the 200 freestyle, ninth in the 500 freestyle and fifth as part of the 400 medley relay team her sophomore season; and finishing third in the 200-yard individual medley, fourth in the 100 backstroke and 100 butterfly, fifth in the 200 backstroke and third as part of the 200-yard medley relay team her first collegiate season... Helped set five new Truman records as a freshman... Helped Truman win three national titles, the only team championships in Truman history... A four-time CSCA academic all-America... A third-team Verizon Academic All-America... Two-time first-team Verizon academic all-district pick... Three-time member of the MIAA commissioner’s academic honor roll... Three-time academic all-MIAA qualifier... Four-year member of Sigma Kappa social sorority... Spent three years coaching summer youth swim league for ages 5-18.

Sarah Wuertz
Senior • Emporia State
Track & Field • Richmond, Kan.
Elementary education major • 4.00 cumulative GPA

2002-03 Athletic Accomplishments: MIAA champion in the Heptathlon for second straight year and third time overall... All-MIAA in four events outdoors and one event indoors... Qualified for NCAA Championships in the heptathlon, placing 13th (4,626 points)... Also qualified for the javelin event at nationals, but gave up her spot so a teammate could compete in the same event... Is ranked eighth in Division II in heptathlon and 15th in javelin... ESU’s Outstanding Female Student-Athlete and named the Wal-Mart Without Peer Award winner by fellow ESU student-athletes.

2002-03 Academic Accomplishments: United States Track Coaches Association (USTCA) All-Academic Team... ESU Athletic Director’s Honor Roll... MIAA Commissioner’s Academic Honor Roll... Academic All-MIAA... MIAA Presidential Scholar... 4.00 GPA.
2002-03 Campus/Community Service: ESU SAAC President… Student member of ESU Athletic Advisory Board… Helped re-roof a house for Habitat for Humanity… Participated in ESU’s SAAC food drive, organ donor awareness week and HPER Building recycling program… Spoke to local elementary and secondary students at National Women and Girls in Sports Day and National Student-Athlete Day… Lector and usher/hospitality minister at Didde Catholic Campus Center.

Career Athletic, Academic and Service Accomplishments: Joined former Hornet and two-time Ken B. Jones Award winner Deandra Doubrava as the only athletes to win three MIAA heptathlon titles and only the fourth women in Division II history to win three conference championships in the heptathlon… Three-time All-American (javelin 2000, 2002; heptathlon 2002)… Five-time MIAA champion (heptathlon 2000, 02, 03; javelin 2002, indoor high jump 2002)… ESU and MIAA Championships record holder in indoor high jump… ESU record holder in javelin… Is in the top five in six different events at ESU.