

For Immediate Release  
Monday, June 28, 1999

Contact: Brian DePasquale  
(518) 442-3072

## UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY ANNOUNCES BASKETBALL RECRUITING CLASSES

Four Men and Two Women will play for the school's first NCAA Division I teams in 1999-2000

ALBANY, N.Y. -- University at Albany head men's basketball coach **Scott Hicks** announced today that he has finalized recruiting for this year with signed commitments from four scholastic standouts. **Mari Warner**, the University's head women's basketball coach, inked two high school stars during the early signing period.

The Great Danes, who will compete at the NCAA Division I level in 1999-2000, awarded scholarships to four men's players. The list includes **Sam Hopes**, a 6'2" guard from Detroit, Mich. (Martin Luther King H.S.), and **Antoine Johnson**, a 6-foot point guard from Lathrup Village, Mich. (Southfield-Lathrup H.S.). **Rasheed Bonner**, a 6'8" forward from University Heights, Ohio (Cleveland Heights H.S.) and **Steve Albany**, a 6'8" forward from Canton, Ohio (GlenOak H.S.) made their commitments in November.

Hopes, who scored 19.0 points per game, was named to the *Detroit Free Press* (fourth team) and *Detroit News* (fifth team) all-state squads. Johnson, a point guard, averaged 16.7 points and 5.3 assists, and earned fifth-team all-state recognition by both the *Detroit News* and *Detroit Free Press*.

An All-Northeast Ohio selection, Albany averaged 13.5 points and 10.5 rebounds in leading GlenOak to a 20-4 campaign. The All-Stark County and All-Federal League forward also participated in the 1999 Ohio-Pennsylvania All-Star Game. Bonner, an All-Lake Erie League choice, contributed 12.0 points and 8.0 rebounds per game on a Cleveland Heights team that reached the district tournament semifinals.

Coach Warner signed two high school backcourt players in **Chris Gray**, a 5'6 guard from Bethel Park (Pa.) H.S., and **Jess McGinlay**, a 5'8" guard from Burke, Va. (Lake Braddock School). In addition, **Julie Tardif**, a 5'10" forward from Atkinson, N.H., transferred from the University of Hartford last December, and was a two-time all-state scholastic selection at Timberlane Regional High School.

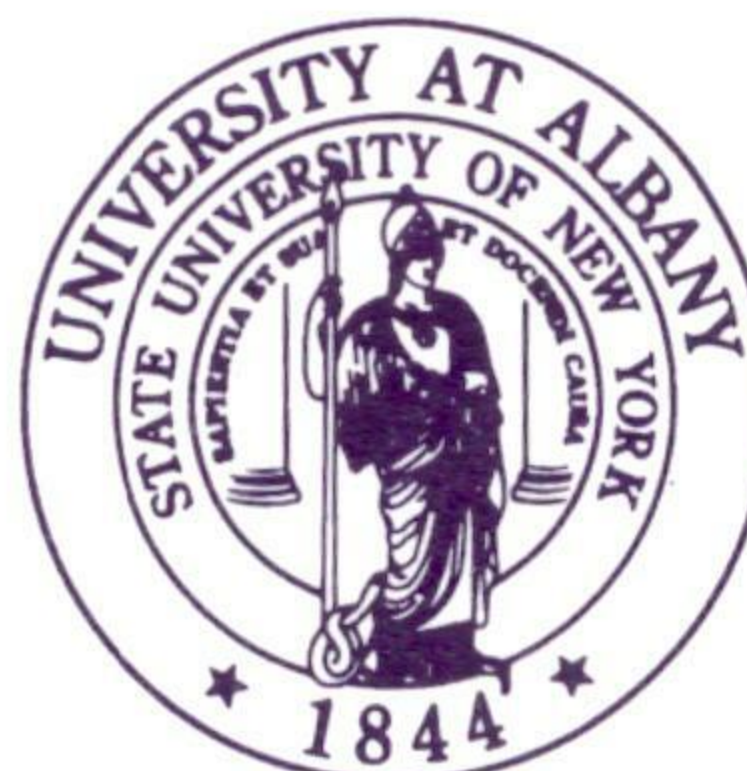
Gray, a top-25 player in Western Pennsylvania, averaged 13.0 points, 4.0 assists and 6.0 steals last winter. The point guard led her team to an 18-6 record and to the No. 9 position in the WPIAA state rankings. McGinlay received first-team All-Patriot District honors, and averaged 15.7 points and 5.3 assists per game. Her squad finished third in the regional tournament, and posted a 21-6 mark.

**Men's Basketball:** Steve Albany, Forward, 6-8, 205, GlenOak H.S., Canton, Ohio; Rasheed Bonner, Forward, 6-8, 210, Cleveland Heights H.S., University Heights, Ohio; Sam Hopes, Guard, 6-2, 175, Martin Luther King H.S., Detroit, Mich.; Antoine Johnson, Guard, 6-0, 170, Southfield-Lathrup H.S., Lathrup Village, Mich.

\*junior college transfer

**Women's Basketball:** Chris Gray, Guard, 5-6, Bethel Park H.S., Bethel Park, Pa.; Jess McGinlay, Guard, 5-8, Lake Braddock School, Burke, Va.; \*Julie Tardif, Forward, 5-10, Timberlane Regional H.S., Atkinson, N.H.

\*University of Hartford transfer



# University at Albany

## Sports Information Fax Cover Sheet

**To:** Sports Department  
**Organization:** Albany Times-Union

**From:** Brian DePasquale  
**Office:** Athletic Media Relations  
**Phone:** (518) 442-3072  
**Fax:** (518) 442-3139  
**E-Mail:** [bdepasquale@uamail.albany.edu](mailto:bdepasquale@uamail.albany.edu)

**Date:** 6-27-99 (Sunday)  
**Pages w/cover:** 2

**Comments:** USA Outdoor Track and Field Championships

### Geoffrey York Fails to Reach 110-Meter High Hurdles Final

Eugene, Ore. -- Former University at Albany All-American Geoffrey York (Troy H.S.) failed in his attempt to advance to the 110-meter high hurdles final at the 1999 USA Outdoor Track and Field Championships on Sunday afternoon at Hayward Field.

York finished last in his semi-final heat with a time of 14.10 seconds. Larry Wade was first across the line in 13.19 seconds.

Mark Crear went on to win the 110-hurdles championship by six-hundredths of a second over Olympic and World champion Allen Johnson in a race that aired nationally on CBS television. Crear was clocked in a wind-aided 13.09 seconds, while Johnson was second in 13.15.

York, who competed for the New York Pioneer Club, was the University at Albany's 1994-95 Male Athlete of the Year, and presently serves on Roberto Vives' staff as a Great Dane assistant coach.

Tonya Dodge, an Albany graduate assistant track coach and All-American distance runner, placed fourth in last Thursday's 3,000-meter steeplechase final.

# University at Albany

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**Date:** 6-26-99 (Saturday)  
**Pages w/cover:** 2

**Comments:** USA Outdoor Track and Field Championships

### Geoffrey York Qualifies for Sunday's 110-Meter High Hurdles Semifinals

Eugene, Ore. -- Former University at Albany All-American Geoffrey York (Troy H.S.) advanced to the semi-final round of the 110-meter high hurdles at the 1999 USA Outdoor Track and Field Championships on Saturday afternoon at Hayward Field.

York, a five-time national champion at the collegiate level, finished fourth in his heat with a time of 13.61 seconds, and was just ahead of co-American record holder and two-time Olympic champion Roger Kingdom (13.62). Mark Crear won the preliminary heat in 13.27.

Olympic and World champion Allen Johnson also reached the semifinals by winning the second heat in 13.21. Larry Wade, the '99 Pre Classic winner, posted the fastest time of the day, as he won the third heat in 13.17.

York, who is competing for the New York Pioneer Club, was the University at Albany's 1994-95 Male Athlete of the Year, and is currently a Great Dane assistant track coach on Roberto Vives' staff.

Sixteen athletes reached Sunday's semifinals that begin at 2:30 ET. The final is scheduled one hour later.

# Heat Results

Flash Results, Inc.

Hy-Tek's MEET MANAGER

06/26/99 7:48 PM

USA Outdoor Track & Field Championships

Page 1

Hayward Field, Univ. of Oregon, Eugene, OR - Thu 06/24/99 to Sun 06/27/99

## Event 29 Men's 110 Meter Hurdles

Results of Preliminaries - Saturday 06/26/99

16 Advance: Top 3 Each Heat Plus Next 7 Best Times

W World: 12.91 Colin Jackson (Great Britain) 1993  
 A American: 12.92 R.Kingdom (adi)'89, A.Johnson (Nike)'96  
 M Meet Record: 13.03 Reggie Torian (Asics) 1998  
 H Hayward Field: 13.12 A Johnson 98; L.Wade 99  
 Qual Mark: 13.82

PL	COMP#	NAME	TEAM	TIME
				Wind reading: 1.6
Heat 1				
1	91	Mark Crear	God Speed TC	13.27 Q
2	109	Tony Dees	Unattached	13.39 Q
3	321	Christopher Phillips	Team Fila	13.59 Q
4	427	Jeffrey York	New York Pioneer Cl	13.61 q
5	229	Roger Kingdom	Adidas	13.62 q
6	36	Richard Benoy	SpringCo	13.72 q
7	432	Darren Youngstrom	Taylor Univ.	14.18
8	17	Kris Allen	Texas A&M	14.21
				Wind reading: 2.2
Heat 2				
1	209	Allen Johnson	Nike	13.21 Q
2	345	Duane Ross	Nike	13.35 Q
3	22	Dominique Arnold	Unattached	13.45 Q
4	331	Terry Reese	Unattached	13.60 q
5	403	Dawaine Wallace	Tennessee	13.60 q
6	187	Aubrey Herring	Indiana State	13.67 q
7	421	Jason Woods	Iowa State	14.01
8	448	Shannon Flowers	Shore AC	14.22
				Wind reading: 1.7
Heat 3				
1	400	Larry Wade	Nike	13.17 Q
2	397	Terrence Trammell	South Carolina	13.32 Q
3	383	Eugene Swift	Elite Athletes Netw	13.46 Q
4	307	Deworski Odom	St. Augustine's	13.59 q
5	273	Uwezu McReynolds	Atlanta Lightning	13.92
6	336	Gregory Richardson	Central Michigan	13.96
7	146	Rusty Fry	Wheeling Jesuit	14.00

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Date: 6-24-99 (Thursday)  
Pages w/cover: 2

### Comments: College Sports

\*\*\*See Attached Release\*\*\* -- Named Jason Santarcangelo (LaSalle Institute) coordinator of promotions and ticket operations and John Kelly head equipment manager.

### FORMER ALBANY ATHLETES COMPETE AT USA OUTDOOR TRACK CHAMPIONSHIPS

Eugene, Ore. -- Former University at Albany athletes Tonya Dodge (Granville Central H.S.) and Geoffrey York (Troy H.S.) will compete this weekend at the 1999 USA Outdoor Track and Field Championships at Hayward Field.

Dodge will run in tonight's women's 3,000-meter steeplechase (9:00 p.m. EST), where she owns the third-fastest time in the nation this year. Dodge, who is entered as a member of the Syracuse Chargers, ran 10:38.94 in April. She is the only woman in school history to earn All-America recognition in cross country, indoor track and outdoor track, and was the University's 1996-97 Female Athlete of the Year. Joan Nesbit, a '96 Olympian, is favored to win the event.

York competes in the men's 110-meter high hurdles, where he will run in the same preliminary heat on Saturday (7:37 EST) with Olympic and World champion Allen Johnson. Sunday's semifinals are scheduled for 2:30 EST, and the finals follow one hour later. York, the 1995 NCAA Division III champion in this event, won five national titles as a member of the Albany track program. He was named the school's 1994-95 Male Athlete of the Year, and now is with the New York Pioneer Club.

### BEN WRIGHT NAMED TO MEN'S AT-LARGE ACADEMIC ALL-AMERICA TEAM

North Easton, Mass. -- University at Albany's Ben Wright (Averill Park H.S.) has been voted to the GTE National Men's Spring At-Large Academic All-America Team. Wright, a second-team selection, posted a 3.79 cumulative grade point average in business administration with a finance concentration, and was a standout track and field athlete.

Wright captured his third consecutive New England Collegiate Conference indoor mile title last February, and competed in the Millrose Games' college mile for the second straight year. During the outdoor season, he anchored Albany's 3,200-meter relay to a school-record performance at the IC4A championships. In addition, he led the Great Danes to both an NECC and ECAC cross country championship.

## 1998-99 GTE/CoSIDA National Men's Spring At-Large Academic All-America Team College Division

### FIRST TEAM

<u>Name</u>	<u>School (District)</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>GPA/Major</u>
Micah Benson	Concordia-Moorhead (MN) (V)	Junior	3.91/Biology
Conor Civins	Emory (III)	Senior	3.80/Political Science
Charles Haben	Augustana (Ill.) (V)	Senior	3.93/Math & Secondary Education
Matt Hagen	Missouri-Rolla (VII)	Senior	3.96/Biological Sciences
Jason Hilt	Kutztown (II)	Senior	4.00/Elementary Education
Jason Hobbs	Bentley (I)	Senior	3.99/Finance
Robby Lane	Northwest Missouri State (VII)	Senior	4.00/Geography
Greg Michael	Concordia-Moorhead (MN) (V)	Senior	3.94/Theology
Steve Michmerhuizen	Calvin (IV)	Senior	3.75/Religion
Brian Moorman	Pittsburg State (VII)	Senior	3.92/History & Education
Mike Pockoski	WPI (I)	Senior	3.96/Civil Engineering
Scott Riggle	Indianapolis (V)	Senior	3.96/English
Chris Schaefer	Loras (VII)	Senior	3.82/International Business
Marc Sondreal	North Dakota (VII)	Senior	3.83/Physical Therapy
Mark Stillwell	Greensboro (III)	Senior	4.00/Business Administration

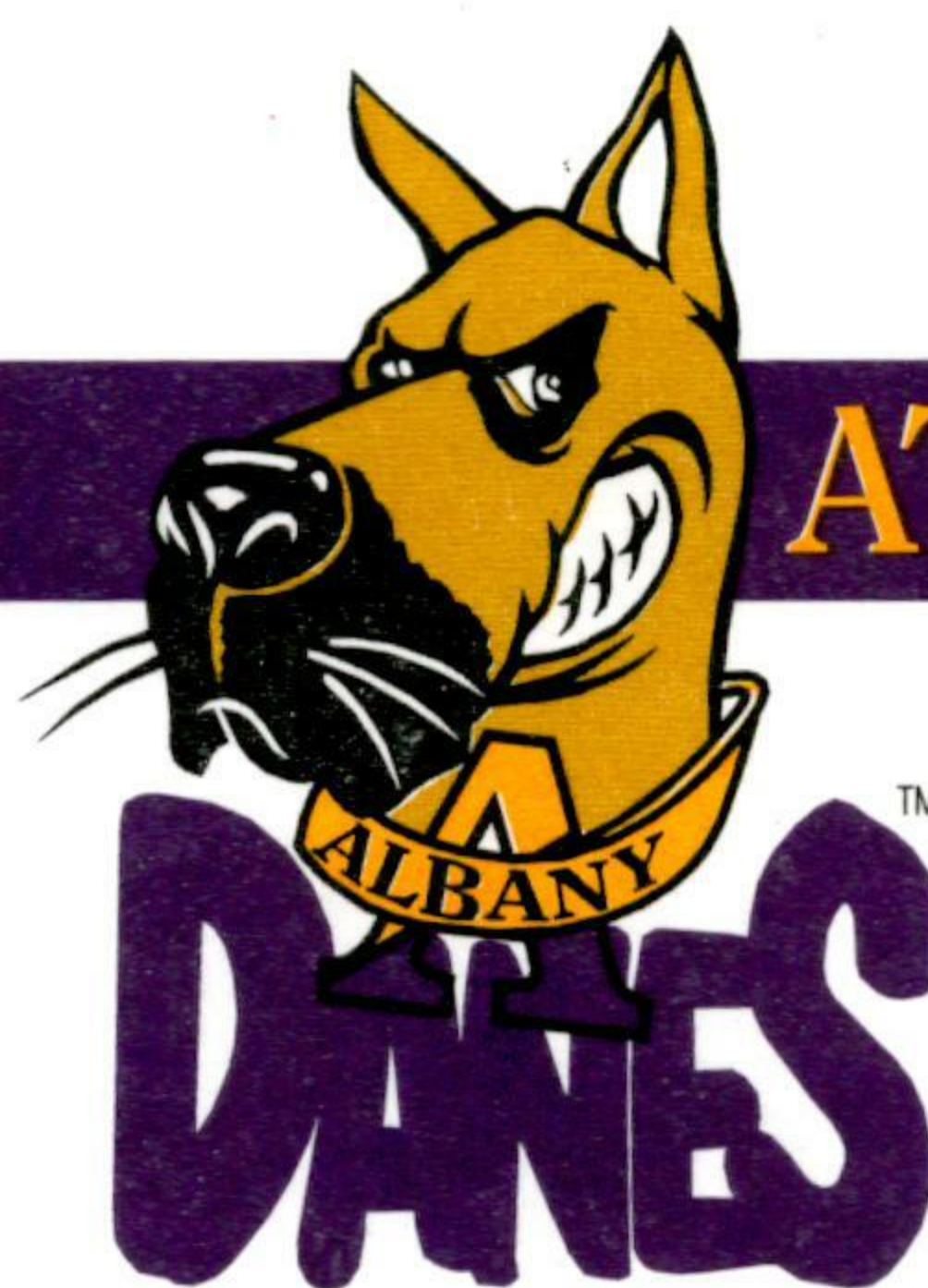
### SECOND TEAM

<u>Name</u>	<u>School (District)</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>GPA/Major</u>
Patrick Bartlett	Wingate (III)	Junior	3.77/Business Administration
Shane Bell	Lake Forest (V)	Junior	4.00/Math & Economics
Rob Dixon	Bloomsburg (II)	Senior	3.45/Marketing
Michael Doyle	Washington (Mo.) (VII)	Junior	3.92/Economics & Finance
Matt Hickl	Texas A&M-Kingsville (VI)	Senior	3.55/Finance
Matt Hoyt	South Dakota (VII)	Senior	3.71/Biology
Justin Jones	Widener (II)	Senior	3.61/Mechanical Engineering
David Litman	Indianapolis (V)	Sophomore	4.48 (4.0)/Business Administration
Mathias Lundmark	Hawaii Pacific (VIII)	Senior	3.83/Business Administration
Eric Nigh	Denison (IV)	Senior	3.73/Philosophy, Politics & Economics
Steve Olex	Franklin & Marshall (II)	Junior	3.90/Science & Philosophy of the Mind
Ian Pitha-Rowe	Haverford (II)	Senior	3.80/Chemistry & Biochemistry
Johan Sandblom	Hawaii Pacific (VIII)	Junior	4.00/Business Administration
Josh Shellenberger	Lebanon Valley (II)	Senior	3.75/Biology & Pre-Med
Ben Wright	Albany (I)	Junior	3.79/Business Administration

### THIRD TEAM

<u>Name</u>	<u>School (District)</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>GPA/Major</u>
Travis Anderson	Millikin (V)	Senior	3.63/Pre-Medicine
Josh Burek	Principia (V)	Senior	3.78/Political Science & Economics
Eric Chen	MLT. (I)	Junior	4.1 (5.0)/Electrical Engineering
Philip Klotzbach	Bridgewater State (I)	Senior	4.00/Geography
Kristo Kriechbaum	Carnegie Mellon (II)	Senior	3.97/Mechanical Engineering
Jay Mellentine	Augustana (Ill.) (V)	Senior	3.61/Accounting & Business
Kevin O'Donnell	Coe (VII)	Senior	3.89/Business Administration
David Parker	George Fox (VIII)	Senior	3.95/International Studies
Gene Pyo	M.I.T. (I)	Senior	4.6 (5.0)/Architecture
Jeevan Ramakrishnan	Trinity (Tex.) (VI)	Junior	3.69/Philosophy
Erik Sandblom	Hawaii Pacific (VIII)	Junior	3.57/Marketing
Mike Schramm	Muskingum (IV)	Junior	4.00/Mathematics & Computer Science
Phil Sikkenga	Calvin (IV)	Sophomore	3.51/Business Administration
Damien Spates	Findlay (IV)	Senior	3.92/Business Administration
Joe Vuotto	Pace (I)	Junior	3.73/Elementary Education

**1998-99 GTE/CoSIDA Men's Spring At-Large National Academic All-America of the Year**  
**Jason Hilt, Kutztown**



For Immediate Release  
Thursday, June 24, 1999

Contact: Brian DePasquale  
(518) 442-3072

### UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY NAMES JASON SANTARCANGELO COORDINATOR OF PROMOTIONS AND TICKET OPERATIONS AND JOHN KELLY HEAD EQUIPMENT MANAGER

ALBANY, N.Y. -- University at Albany Interim Director of Athletics Gail Cummings-Danson has announced the hiring of **Jason Santarcangelo** as coordinator of promotions and ticket operations and **John Kelly** as head equipment manager.

Santarcangelo, 22, spent the last year as an Asa S. Bushnell Intern with the Eastern College Athletic Conference in Centerville, Mass., where he assisted with the administration of policies and procedures for the conference's six ice hockey leagues and various sports championships. He also worked in the ECAC's public relations department, and was the editor of the 1998-99 Directory and Record Book and assistant editor of the 1998 Football Media Guide.

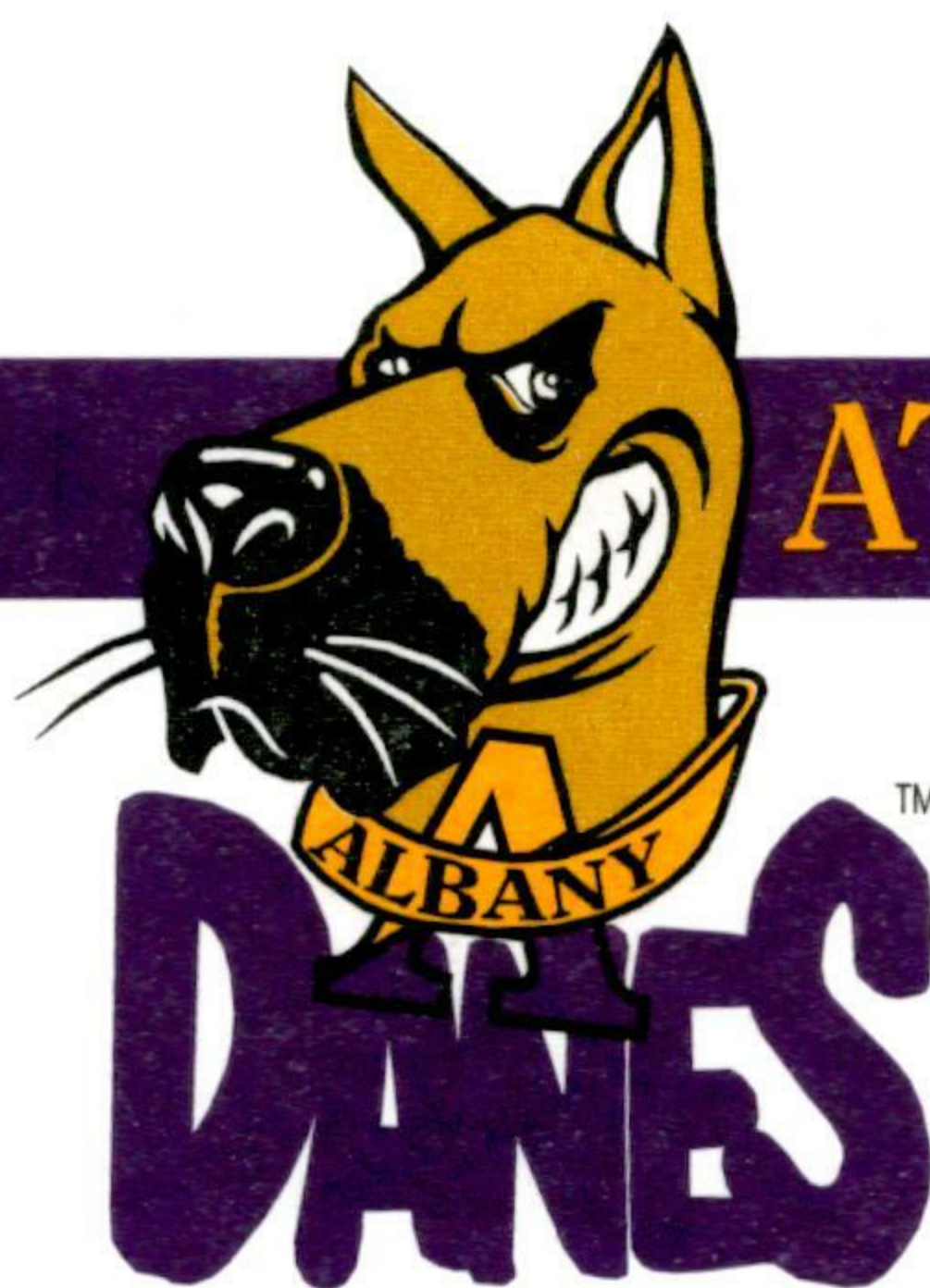
A native of Latham, N.Y., Santarcangelo was also an account executive with the American Hockey League's Albany River Rats, and developed contacts and marketed services for group ticket sales and corporate advertising, and organized game night promotions. He received his undergraduate degree in communication studies with a minor in government from Hamilton College.

Kelly, 28, held the position of assistant equipment manager at Boston College for the last two years, and worked specifically with football, men's and women's basketball and track and field, women's volleyball, and men's lacrosse. He handled all game-day and travel preparations, computer inventory, and purchasing. Kelly also served as assistant equipment manager at Syracuse University from 1995-97, and monitored the men's and women's basketball programs and other sports.

In addition, Kelly was an equipment intern and head student manager for football at his alma mater Ashland University in Ohio, where he earned a B.S. in recreational administration in 1995. He is AEMA certified, and has knowledge of all NOCSAE standards for the safety of athletes.

Albany moves its entire 19-sport intercollegiate athletics program for men and women to the NCAA Division I level, effective in 1999-2000. Football will compete in the I-AA classification.





For Immediate Release  
Tuesday, June 8, 1999

Contact: Brian DePasquale  
(518) 442-3072

## UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY RELEASES MEN'S AND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL SCHEDULES Great Danes Will Compete at NCAA Division I level in 1999-2000

ALBANY, N.Y. -- The University at Albany announced today its men's and women's basketball schedules for the 1999-2000 season. The Great Danes' 19-sport intercollegiate athletics program moves up to the NCAA Division I level in September. Men's and women's basketball will compete as independents next year.

Big East Conference members Syracuse and Rutgers, who appeared in last year's NCAA and NIT tournaments, respectively, highlight the men's away schedule. Albany meets Syracuse on December 7 at the Carrier Dome, and Rutgers on a date to be determined. The Great Danes also travel to Long Beach State, of the Big West Conference, and Lafayette, the Patriot League champion.

Niagara, the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference co-regular season champion, and Duquesne, of the Atlantic 10 Conference, are among the teams who will visit the Recreation and Convocation Center. Army, Vermont and Dartmouth are included in the 12-game home schedule.

**Todd Cetnar** and **Will Brand**, a pair of second-team All-New England Collegiate Conference selections, lead a group of four returning starters. Cetnar, a 6-foot senior, led the Great Danes with a 16.2 scoring average, while Brand, the '99 NECC Rookie of the Year, contributed 14.7 points and 6.6 rebounds.

The Albany women's schedule features three NCAA tournament teams. The Great Danes are on the road against Mississippi State, a 17-game winner in the Southeastern Conference, co-Ivy League champion Dartmouth, and Patriot League titleist Holy Cross. Albany has 11 home games, including Akron, of the Mid-American Conference, and Richmond, of the Colonial Athletic Association.

**Megan Buchanan**, a second-team All-NECC forward, was Albany's top scorer last year with a 15.2 average. **Liz Tucker**, a 5'10" junior who scored at a 10.3 clip, and senior center **Melissa Schoonover** (7.5 ppg, 5.9 rpg) were also regulars in the lineup.

### 1999-2000 Albany Men's Basketball Schedule

#### November

19-20 (Fri.-Sat.), at Central Connecticut State Classic (Central Conn. State, Army, Stony Brook); 23 (Tue.), at Maryland-Eastern Shore; 26 (Fri.), **Elon**; 28 (Sun.), **Niagara**.

#### December

2 (Thu.), **Vermont**; 4 (Sat.), at Liberty; 7 (Tue.) at Syracuse (Carrier Dome); 9 (Thu.), at Monmouth; 13 (Mon.), **Green Mountain**; 29 (Wed.), at Long Beach State.

#### January

3 (Mon.), at Wagner; 6 (Thu.), at Harvard; 9 (Sun.), at Lehigh; 12 (Wed.), **Maryland-Eastern Shore**; 17 (Mon.), **Texas A&M-Corpus Christi**; 19 (Wed.), at Delaware State; 21 (Fri.), at Stony Brook; 25 (Tue.), **Southern Vermont**; 29 (Sat.), **Dartmouth**.

#### February

5 (Sat.), **Stony Brook**; 7 (Mon.), at Lafayette; 16 (Wed.), **Duquesne**; 19 (Sat.), **Army**; 21 (Mon.), **Morgan State**; 23 (Wed.), at Bucknell; 29 (Tue.), at Colgate.

At Rutgers (to be scheduled at a later date)

\*\*\*MORE\*\*\*





## Albany Basketball Schedules 2-2-2-2

### 1999-2000 Albany Women's Basketball Schedule

#### *November*

19 (Fri.), at Iona; 23 (Tue.), **Wagner**; 30 (Tue.), at Manhattan.

#### *December*

3-4 (Fri.-Sat), at Cornell Classic (Cornell, Hofstra, Bucknell); 7 (Tue.) at George Washington; 9 (Thu.), **Buffalo**; 22 (Wed.), **Akron**; 29 (Wed.), at Robert Morris.

#### *January*

2 (Sun.), **Richmond**; 5 (Wed.), at Holy Cross; 7 (Fri.), **Brown**; 9 (Sun.), **Daemen**; 11 (Tue.), at Stony Brook; 15 (Sat.), at Lehigh; 18 (Tue.), at Boston U.; 22 (Sat.), **Colgate**; 25 (Tue.), at Dartmouth; 29 (Sat.), at Harvard; 31 (Mon.), **Navy**.

#### *February*

2 (Wed.), at Army; 5 (Sat.), **Stony Brook**; 7 (Mon.), at Lafayette; 13 (Sun.), at Mississippi State; 15 (Tue.), **Green Mountain**; 19 (Sat.), **St. Joseph, Vt.**; 23 (Wed.), at Bucknell.

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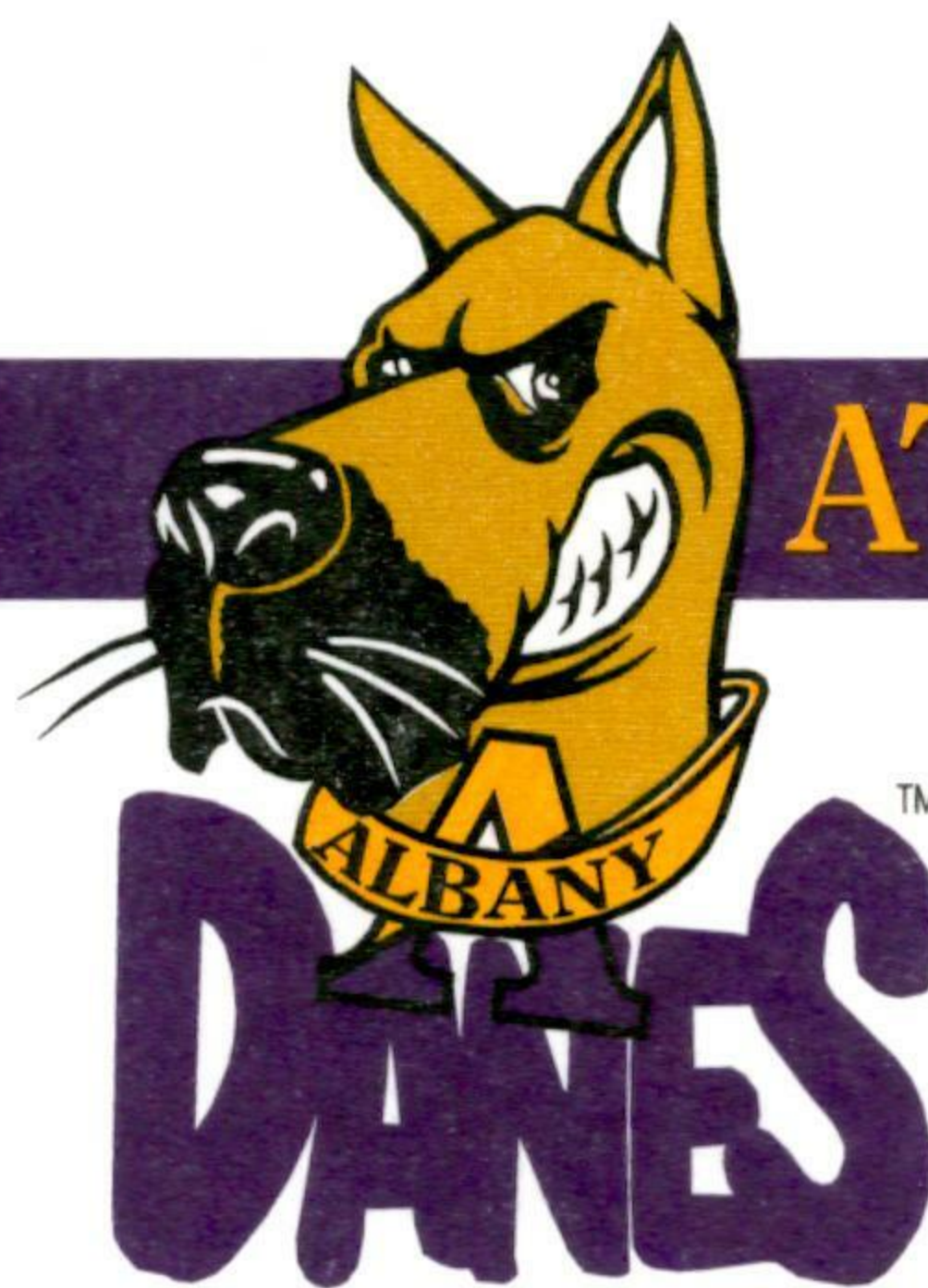
### Comments:

**\*\*\*Sports News Release Attached\*\*\***

### Tom Alexander Named to STX/USILA Division II All-America Lacrosse Team

College Park, Md. -- University at Albany's Tom Alexander (Guilderland H.S. / Altamont, N.Y.) has been chosen to the 1999 STX/U.S. Intercollegiate Lacrosse Association Division II All-America Team for the third consecutive year. Alexander, a senior defenseman, was voted to the USILA national second team.

Alexander appeared in all 13 games for the Great Danes this spring, and had one goal, one assist, and 48 groundballs. He spearheaded a defensive unit which allowed 10.69 goals per game. During his career, the 6-foot-2, 220-pound defender was twice selected to the Capital District College Lacrosse League all-star squad, and totaled 176 groundballs in 50 games played. Albany posted a 7-6 record in its final Division II campaign.



For Immediate Release  
Wednesday, June 2, 1999

Contact: Brian DePasquale  
(518) 442-3072

### UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY NAMES BILL BANAGAN, WADE BOXLEITNER, CHRIS HILL AND SEAN PADDEN ASSISTANT FOOTBALL COACHES

ALBANY, N.Y. -- University at Albany head football coach Bob Ford has announced the hiring of **Bill Banagan**, **Wade Boxleitner**, **Chris Hill** and **Sean Padden** as assistant coaches. Banagan will work with tight ends, Boxleitner will handle outside linebackers, and Hill and Padden are assisting with the offensive and defensive lines, respectively.

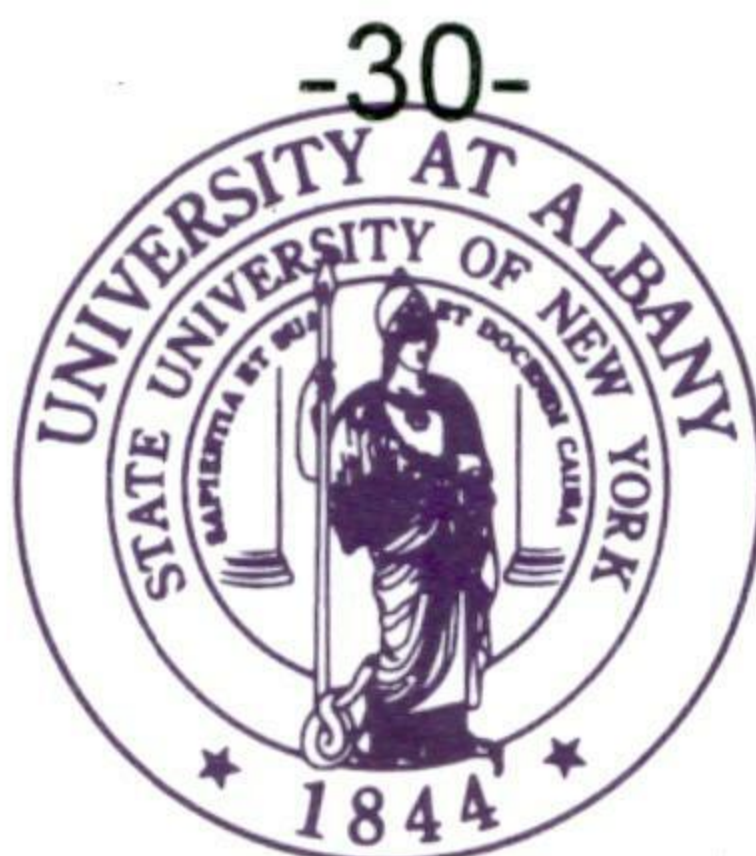
Banagan, 37, was recently the offensive coordinator at Bishop Maginn High School in Albany, New York. He coached for nine years at his alma mater, and worked with the offensive line, receivers and tight ends. Banagan was an all-league tight end with the Metro Mallers, a semi-professional team, and lettered twice for Coach Ford as a collegian at Albany in the early 1980s. He has an undergraduate degree in economics with a minor in business administration, and was an All-Big Ten selection as a scholastic quarterback and defensive back.

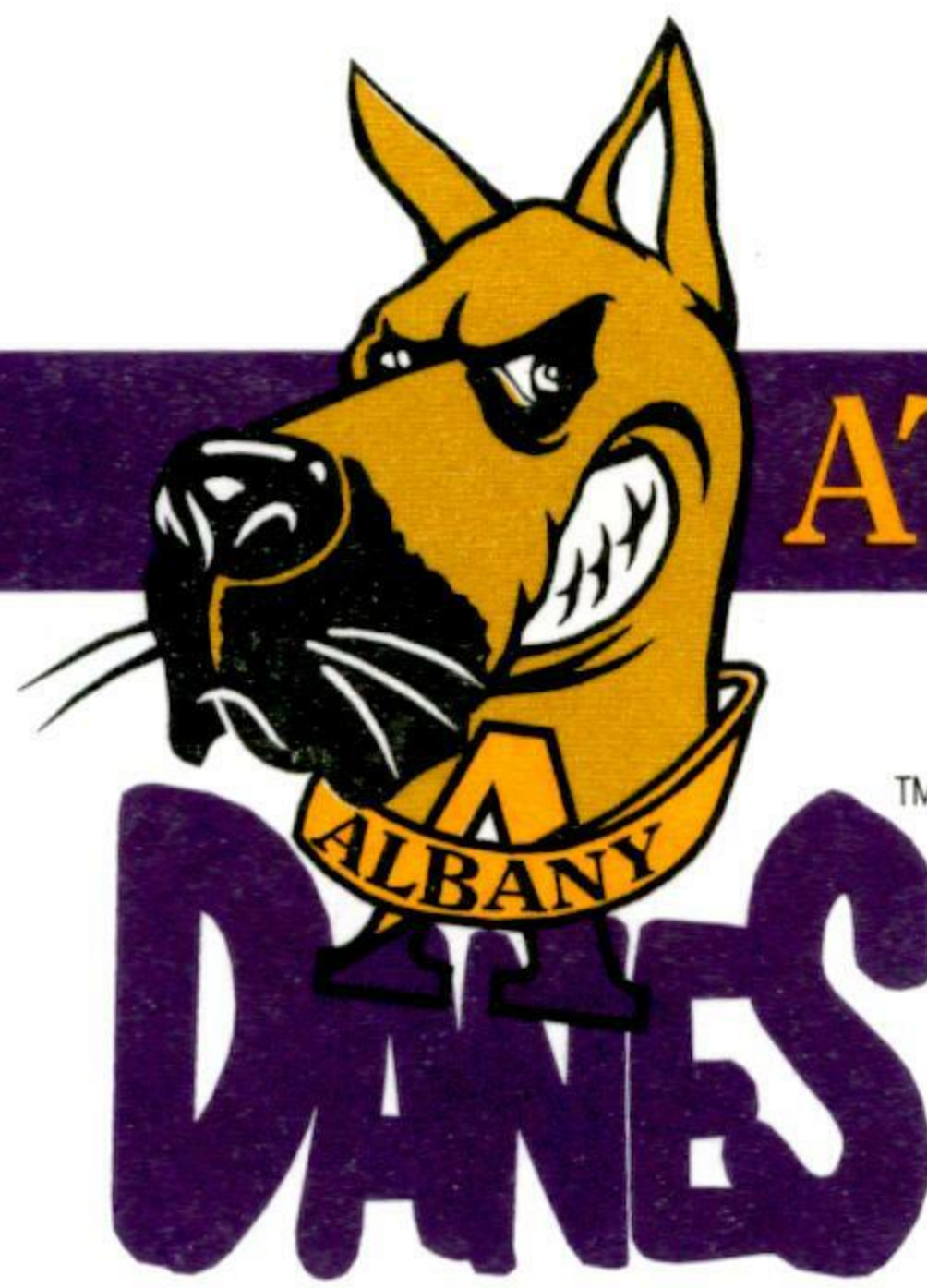
Boxleitner, 23, served as a graduate assistant coach at the University of South Dakota last year, and specifically coached outside linebackers, prepared scouting reports, and recruited the state of Illinois. In 1997, he was an assistant at Brockport State, and responsible for the offensive line and tight ends. A four-year starter at Blackburn College in Carlinville, Illinois, Boxleitner was an All-St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference inside linebacker, and received his B.A. in physical education.

Padden, 24, has spent the last two years as defensive line coach at Albright College in Reading, Pennsylvania. He was involved in scouting, recruiting, and served as the junior varsity team's defensive coordinator during the 1997 season. Padden was also a student assistant for one year at his alma mater Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. A native of Norristown, Pa., Padden was a three-year letterwinner at Catholic, and earned a B.A. in accounting.

Hill, 24, was previously assistant offensive line/tight ends coach at Olivet Nazarene University in Kankakee, Illinois. The Tigers reached the '98 NAIA Division I national championship, and posted an 11-3 record. Hill, at 6-foot-7 and 310 pounds, was a two-time All-America offensive tackle at Olivet Nazarene, where he received an undergraduate degree in physical education and secondary teaching. He originally attended Purdue University, and was a member of the Boilermaker football team for three years prior to transferring in 1996.

Albany moves its entire 19-sport intercollegiate athletics program for men and women to the NCAA Division I level, effective in 1999-2000. Football will compete as a I-AA program, and is a member of the Northeast Conference.





For Immediate Release  
Tuesday, June 1, 1999

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## UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY NAMES 1998-99 ATHLETES OF THE YEAR Kelly Poynton, Xiomara Davila Diaz and Steve Checksfield Are Chosen

ALBANY, N.Y. -- **Steve Checksfield**, a two-sport standout in football and baseball, track star **Xiomara Davila Diaz** and softball pitcher **Kelly Poynton** have been selected as the University at Albany's 1998-99 Male and Female Athletes of the Year. The athletes were chosen in voting by the head coaches of Albany's 19-sport intercollegiate athletics program.

Checksfield, a sophomore from Hurley, N.Y., was a first-team *Football Gazette* Division II non-scholarship All-America tight end, and helped lead the Great Danes to the 1998 Eastern Football Conference championship and a 10-1 record. The ECAC-North All-Star had 22 receptions for 432 yards and seven touchdowns, and hauled in two scoring passes in the EFC championship game. On special teams, he punted 54 times for a 33.0 average and was second on the team in scoring with 52 points as a place-kicker. Checksfield, a first-team All-New England Collegiate Conference outfielder in baseball, led Albany to a school-record 21 victories, and an appearance in the ECAC Division II championship final. He posted a .360 batting average with 50 runs, 45 RBIs, 20 extra-base hits and 11 stolen bases.

Davila Diaz, a senior from Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, and Poynton, a senior from Orchard Park, N.Y., are sharing the school's top female athlete award. Davila Diaz was the athlete of the meet at both the ECAC Division II and New England Collegiate Conference indoor championships, and led the Great Danes to both team titles. At the ECAC meet, she won the 55-meter hurdles, placed second in two other events, and was a member of the winning distance-medley relay. She was a double-winner in the 55-hurdles and 55-dash at NECC indoors, and anchored the first-place 1,600-meter relay. Davila Diaz qualified for the ECAC Division I outdoor championships in both the 100- and 400-hurdles. In addition, she led the 1,600-relay to the women's program's first-ever Penn Relays title with an event- and school-record performance.

Poynton earned All-New England Collegiate Conference honors for the second consecutive season with a 15-4 record, five shutouts, two saves and a 1.41 earned run average. The UA right-hander was named tournament MVP in leading Albany to the 1999 ECAC Division II Mid-Atlantic championship, and a school-record 33-14 mark. She was chosen NECC Pitcher of the Week on three occasions, and averaged 7.72 strikeouts per seven innings. Poynton finished her career with a 40-13 record, 15 shutouts, 399 strikeouts and a 1.60 ERA.

### Past University at Albany Athletes of the Year

- 1997-98: Male: Joe Savino (Football); Female: Rafaela Nikas (Lacrosse/Volleyball)  
 1996-97: Male: Jomo Forrester (Soccer/Track), Anthony Vitti (Football);  
 Female: Tonya Dodge (Cross Country/Track)  
 1995-96: Male: Dennis King (Cross Country/Track); Female: Debbie August (Lacrosse)  
 1994-95: Male: Geoffrey York (Track); Female: Melinda Cook-Carpenter (Softball)

