

NEWS RELEASE

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Three USM Spires Volleyball Players Honored by NAIA for Academic and Athletic Performance

(Leavenworth, Kan.)—Three University of Saint Mary volleyball players were named 2009 Volleyball Scholar-Athletes by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) last week, including senior Stephanie Wright, who was also named to the NAIA's All-Region Volleyball team

The winning Spires include Wright, an outside hitter from Shawnee, Kan., Mary Ann Snyder, a senior hitter and defensive specialist from Lee's Summit, Mo., and Kara Gindlesperger, a senior opposite hitter from Eugene, Ore. To be considered for the award, nominees must be at least juniors and have a 3.5 grade-point average on a 4.0 scale.

Wright, Snyder, and Gindlesperger were among just 304 volleyball players to be so honored nationwide.

In securing her All-Region honor, Wright this season had 337 kills, 68 ace serves, 26 blocks, and 399 digs despite missing three matches due to injury.

"I am very proud on all three players," said USM Head Volleyball Coach Paul Lawson. "This is the first time in my coaching career that I have had three young ladies become Academic All Americans in the same season. They have all worked very hard on the court and in the class room, and they are the example of what a true student athlete can be."

The Lady Spires Volleyball team finished the season with 10-17 record overall, and a 7-11 mark in Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference (KCAC) play. USM advanced to the quarterfinal round of the KCAC volleyball championship tournament in November.

Besides the NAIA honors, both Wright and Snyder took home KCAC awards for their strong play in the recently-completed season.

Wright was named to the KCAC All-Conference First Team for the second straight year. She was also named a conference hitter of the week during the season. Snyder was named to the KCAC honorable mention team.

The University of Saint Mary is a Catholic co-educational applied liberal arts university founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. The University of Saint Mary is located at 4100 South 4th Street, Leavenworth, Kan., with additional locations in Overland Park, Shawnee, and Kansas City, Kan. Visit www.stmary.edu on the web for more information.

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