

## NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: John Shultz (913) 758-6165  
Email: [shultz35@stmary.edu](mailto:shultz35@stmary.edu)



### University of Saint Mary Spires Men's and Women's Hoopsters Earn All-Conference Team Honors

(Leavenworth, Kan.)—The Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference (KCAC) has honored three Spires basketball players—two from the University of Saint Mary Men's Basketball Team and one from the Lady Spires squad—in naming the conference's All-KCAC teams for the 2009-2010 basketball season.

From the men's team, sophomore Eric Avant, a 6'5" guard out of Olathe, Kan., was named KCAC Newcomer of the Year and as a unanimous selection to the All-KCAC First Team. Jeb Greenberg, a 6'2" freshman guard from Leavenworth, Kan., was named to the All-KCAC Honorable Mention Team and to the KCAC's All-Freshman Team.

From the women's squad, junior Samantha Ciani, a 6'0" forward out of Glenwood Springs, Colo., earned a First Team All-KCAC nod.

"Throughout the season, Eric has been a tremendous player. His individual accomplishments have been remarkable, though he always manages to play within the team and our system first," USM Head Men's Basketball Coach Jon Bishop said. "I'm proud of him, Jeb, and all of our players."

Mike Basler, USM's head women's basketball coach, praised Ciani as a rare Spire.

"Samantha's one of the best players I've ever coached," Basler said. "She should be as proud of herself as the USM coaching staff is of her."

For Avant, the All-Conference awards are only the latest in a season of distinctions. Earlier in the year, he was named Division II Men's Basketball Player of the Week by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), and he was twice tapped as men's basketball player of the week by the KCAC.

The honorees will be recognized at the KCAC Tournament championship game Tuesday, March 2.

The Spire Men are still in the KCAC Tournament. USM upset no. 2 seed McPherson College on Thursday, Feb. 25, and will face Bethany College on the road in the semifinals of the KCAC Tournament at 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27. The Lady Spires lost a tournament play-in game to Bethany College on Monday, Feb. 22.

Saint Mary has eight varsity sports: football, volleyball, baseball, softball, men's and women's basketball, and men's and women's soccer. Learn more about the USM athletics programs at [www.gospire.com](http://www.gospire.com).

*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](http://www.stmary.edu) for more information.*