



Excelling On and Off the Court

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EXCELLING ON AND OFF THE COURT

In July, 16 Dordt College teams earned a place on the prestigious list of NAIA Scholar-Teams. The NAIA awards this distinction to athletic teams that maintain at least a 3.0 GPA.

“Our coaches take very seriously the task of challenging our team members to excel and grow academically and spiritually. Being recognized as NAIA Scholar-Teams is evidence of this,” says Dordt College Athletic Director Glenn Bouma.

The Defenders had the top GPA in Division II men’s basketball at 3.47.

The foundation for this team’s academic success begins in the recruiting process.

“We look for students who desire to be a part of a campus community that values Christian education, a positive attitude toward learning, a 40-year vision, not a 4-year requirement, and an ability to play basketball,” says Dordt College Coach Ross Douma.

The work truly begins when a student arrives on campus and becomes a part of the program.

“We tell athletes and parents that we will use the Academic Enrichment Center if players are not attaining a B in each of their courses,” says Douma. He and his fellow coaches want to make sure that athletes retain their academic scholarships by maintaining a 3.0 GPA. “Receiving that scholarship each year is crucial, so we want to do all we can to assist them with that piece,” Douma says.
Dordt’s

2015-16 TEAMS

Women’s Cross Country: 3.57

Women’s Volleyball: 3.53

Women’s Indoor Track & Field: 3.47

Women’s Outdoor Track & Field: 3.47

Men’s Basketball: 3.47

Softball: 3.45

Women’s Basketball: 3.43

coaches are also committed to helping their players have promising career options once they graduate. “The student-athlete is simply more marketable with a 3.0-plus GPA,” says Douma.

Douma is quick to point out that being named to the Scholar-Team list is a team effort.

“This accomplishment speaks to the networking that takes place across campus at Dordt College,” says Douma. “We have a faculty that wants students to be successful and will communicate repeatedly with coaches in an effort to help our student-athletes learn.”

Nate Wolf coaches the women’s and men’s cross country teams, both of which have been regulars on the list. This year’s women’s team had a combined GPA of 3.57, the highest of all Dordt teams. Wolf sees a correlation between academically driven students and successful athletic teams.

“Our best athletes don’t always have the best GPA, but they are often our hardest working students. They are typically getting the most out of their God-given abilities, both academically and athletically,” says Wolf.

MIKE BYKER (’92)

Faculty Notes

Education Professor Dr. **Pat Kornelis** gave a presentation titled “Yearlong Student Teaching: Boom or Bust” at the National Association for Professional Development Schools in Orlando, Fla., in April.



Political Science Professor Dr. **Jeff Taylor** was on a panel focusing on a new biography of the late Senator George McGovern (D-SD) at the annual Dakota Conference of the Center for Western Studies at Augustana University in Sioux Falls, S.D.



Education Professor Dr. **Timothy Van Soelen** published a book with Routledge titled *Crafting the Feedback Teachers Need and Deserve: A Guide for Leaders*. He also published several articles: “Teamwork Boosts Student Learning and Professional Community for Phi Delta Kappa Common Core Writing Project,” “Navigation Aids: 9 Shifts in Practice Smooth the Transition from School to Central Office” in the *Journal of Staff Development*, and “Evaluation and Support: It Doesn’t Have to Be One or the Other” in *Principal Leadership*.

Theology Professor Dr. **Benjamin Lappenga** was appointed co-chair of the “Speech and Talk in the Ancient Mediterranean World” sectional of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL). Serving alongside Dr. Michal Beth Dinkler of Yale University, Lappenga will coordinate multiple sessions at the annual meetings of the SBL held each November. He also presented a paper at the Midwest Regional of the SBL entitled “Violence and the Retelling of the Story of Jephthah’s Daughter in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*.” This summer he spent two weeks in Israel with a group from Fuller Theological Seminary. In addition to facilitating and consulting on biblical scholarship, he spent the time planning for an upcoming Dordt off-campus course to be offered this coming May.

