

Conrad earns NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship

WILLIAMSPORT, Pa. – Already a two-time Academic All-American wrestler, **Brandon Conrad** '18 (Bloomsburg, Pa./Bloomsburg) left one more prestigious mark on Lycoming College on Tuesday, May 15, when he was one of 58 NCAA Postgraduate Scholarships for the winter season, the organization announced.

Conrad joins football **Sam Dressler** '18 (Riverside, Pa./Danville Area) and men's soccer player **Justin Walker** '14 as the only NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship winners in the Lycoming athletic department's history.

“Quantifying the impact of wrestling on me would prove impossible,” Conrad said. “It has shaped my life more than ever in the past four years and provided the platform for future success. The role of student-athlete has taught me how to lead, stay persistent and appreciate opportunity.”

Conrad, a chemistry major, finished his senior year with a 31-7 record at 174 pounds. Conrad finished second at the NCAA Southeast Regional to qualify for the NCAA Division III Championships for the first time, where he posted a 1-2 record and finished in the top 12 in the country. He entered the top 10 in the national rankings for the first time in his career during the season thanks to a tournament title at the RIT Invitational, where he beat Oswego's sixth-ranked Troy Seymour in the finals. He rose as high as sixth in the NWCA poll.

Conrad finished his career with a 111-46 record, landing him sixth in the school's career record book in wins with Rob Cospers '00. He is tied for ninth with 30 career falls and tied for fifth with 58 decisions.

“I'm very fortunate to have had someone so enthusiastic, competent, efficient and knowledgeable on my team,” Lycoming head coach Roger Crebs said. “Brandon has proven, without a doubt, his ability to accept challenges and complete them successfully.” The 174-pounder placed at the NCAA Regional three times in his career, earned two Second Team All-MAC honors and posted three straight seasons with 30 or more wins. He earned Google Cloud Academic All-District honors three times, taking Second Team Academic All-American honors as a sophomore and third-team as a junior, becoming the first male athlete at Lycoming College to repeat as an Academic All-American.

Conrad earned Dean's List honors from the college eight times in his career and racked up several institutional awards, including the M.B. Rich Endowed Prize, three endowed scholarships and he was selected for induction into the Phi Kappa Phi (general) and Gamma Sigma Epsilon (chemistry) honor societies.

“What stands out to me is Brandon's involvement in the Warrior Coffee Initiative,” Lycoming College Faculty Athletic Representative Sue Beidler said. “Several years ago Lycoming College began a small project in a village in the Dominican Republic to develop our own “brand” of coffee that was purchased at fair prices directly from the coffee

farmers. As that relationship between the College and the farmers grew, the program expanded into other areas including projects intended to improve quality of life for the villagers. Last year, Conrad was selected to travel to the Dominican Republic as part of the group working on improving water quality. I believe his participation in this experience was both enriching for him and valuable for the college. It gave him a real sense of what a small group of dedicated people could accomplish.”

During his time at Lycoming, Conrad also worked as a chemistry tutor, a study group facilitator and a writing center tutor.

Conrad will continue his education at Louisiana State University, where he will enter the chemistry Ph.D. program, where he will focus on organic chemistry. He said that due to a cousin, Carissa, who passed away from a rare adrenal cancer while he was in high school, and his father, who has battled liposarcoma, a cancer of fat cells, for six years, he has developed an interest in medical research and related topics.

“LSU’s Department of Chemistry heads projects integrating organic chemistry into medically and biologically relevant research,” Conrad wrote in his personal essay. “I aim to apply my skills, diligence and ambition to progressing such projects. My long-term goals include continuing with research topics for which I remain passionate and likely filling the role of a professor and mentor.”

The NCAA awards Postgraduate Scholarships to student-athletes who are in their final year of college athletics eligibility. Up to 175 scholarships are awarded each year for use toward an accredited graduate program. Awardees are evaluated on their academic and athletic achievement, campus involvement, community service, volunteer activities and demonstrated leadership. The program rewards college athletes whose dedication and effort reflect the characteristics needed to succeed in graduate study.

"These scholarships are one of the ways the NCAA provides a pathway to opportunity for student-athletes," said Mattie White, chair of the NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship Committee and senior associate athletics director at Indiana. "These scholarships are reserved for student-athletes with distinguished college careers highlighted by outstanding achievements in academics, athletics, community service and leadership. These experiences prepare them for success in graduate study and life."

The NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship was created in 1964 to promote and encourage postgraduate education by rewarding the Association's most accomplished student-athletes through their participation in NCAA championship and/or emerging sports. Athletics and academic achievements, as well as campus involvement, community service, volunteer activities and demonstrated leadership, are evaluated. An equitable approach is employed in reviewing each applicant's nomination form to provide opportunity to all student-athlete nominees to receive the postgraduate award, regardless of sport, division, gender or race. In maintaining the highest broad-based standards in the selection process, the program aims to reward those individuals whose dedication and effort are reflective of those characteristics necessary to succeed and thrive through postgraduate study in an accredited graduate degree program.

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