

SBU PRESENTED WITH GLVC'S 2020-21 JAMES R. SPALDING OVERALL SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

By Spencer Greathouse '16, '21 and the Great Lakes Valley Conference

Southwest Baptist University was named the 2020-21 recipient of the Great Lakes Valley Conference's James R. Spalding Overall Sportsmanship Award for the first time after just two years as a full-time member of the conference.



At the conclusion of each sport's season, the head coaches across the conference rank the top three teams that displayed good sportsmanship throughout the season. The team with the highest ranking receives the sportsmanship award for that sport's season, and the institution with the highest point total across all sports receives the James R. Spalding Overall Sportsmanship Award. SBU led the league with five team sportsmanship awards: women's cross country, volleyball, men's basketball, women's basketball, and women's track & field.

In addition, head coaches from each sport select an individual from their team to serve as a candidate for the institution's individual James R. Spalding Sportsmanship Award. From those candidates, each institution selects one male and one female to be named the James R. Spalding Sportsmanship Individual Award winners. Men's track and field athlete Asa Carter '21 and women's basketball player Regan Tibbits were selected as SBU's James R. Spalding Sportsmanship Individual Award winners.

Behind SBU's five-team sportsmanship selections was Quincy University with four, including both men's and women's lacrosse, softball, and men's tennis. Missouri S&T had three teams picked at the top (women's soccer, men's swimming, men's golf), while the only other multi-sport school winners were Truman State University (football and baseball) and McKendree (women's bowling and men's basketball).



University of Illinois-Springfield men's cross country, University of Missouri-St. Louis men's soccer, Lindenwood University women's swimming, associate member Davenport University men's wrestling, Maryville University women's golf, University of Southern Indiana women's tennis, and University of Indianapolis men's outdoor track & field each earned awards.

SBU joins nine other schools as award winners in the 13-year period the honor has been presented – former league member Northern Kentucky University (2007-08), former member University of Wisconsin-Parkside (2008-09), Bellarmine (2009- 10, 2010-11), University of Southern Indiana (2011-12), Drury University (2012-13), Lewis University (2013-14), William Jewell (2014-15), Maryville (2015-16), Truman (2016- 17, 2018-19), and former member Bellarmine University (2017-18).

The GLVC renamed its annual sportsmanship award in 2016 after Spalding, who is referenced as one of the league's two "Founding Fathers" and for his longtime service at Bellarmine from a student-athlete, to a coach to director of athletics. During his tenure as AD, Spalding expanded Bellarmine's participation in intercollegiate sports from four

to 16 teams and played a prominent role in both the formation of the GLVC and the sponsorship expansion of women's athletics within the league. Long revered as one of the league's pioneers, Spalding was inducted as a charter member of the GLVC Hall of Fame in 2001. He died in 2012 at the age of 79, following a lengthy illness.

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