

Northeast Conference

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For Immediate Release

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Central Connecticut State Tailback Justise Hairston Named NEC Offensive Player of the Year Albany Linebacker Colin Disch Earns Second Consecutive NEC Defensive Player of the Year Award

*Monmouth's David Sinisi Selected NEC Offensive Rookie of the Year
Stony Brook's Cory Giddings Chosen NEC Defensive Rookie of the Year
Monmouth's Kevin Callahan Named NEC Coach of the Year*

Somerset, NJ – Central Connecticut State senior running back **Justise Hairston (New Britain, CT/New Britain)** became the second Blue Devil running back in three years to capture NEC Offensive Player of the Year honors, while Albany junior linebacker **Colin Disch (North Plainfield, NJ/North Plainfield)** earned his second straight NEC Defensive Player of the Year award in balloting conducted by league head coaches. Monmouth freshman running back **David Sinisi (Cedar Grove, NJ/Cedar Grove)** was named NEC Offensive Rookie of the Year and Stony Brook freshman defensive back **Cory Giddings (Ocean, NJ/Ocean Township)** earned NEC Defensive Rookie of the Year accolades. Monmouth's **Kevin Callahan** was tabbed NEC Coach of the Year for the third time in his career.

Hairston comes off a spectacular senior year at Central Connecticut State after spending his first three years at Rutgers. The New Britain, CT native, who is one of 16 finalists for the Walter Payton Award, given annually to the top player in I-AA, established a school and NEC record this past season with 1,847 rushing yards. He led the conference and matched a CCSU single-season mark with 20 rushing touchdowns and also set an NEC record with 2,198 all-purpose yards. At the conclusion of the regular season, Hairston leads the nation in all-purpose yardage (199.8 ypg), rushing yardage (167.9 ypg) and is sixth in scoring (10.9 ppg). He compiled two of the top seven and three of the top 11 individual rushing performances in the nation this season, including a 332-yard effort against Saint Francis (PA) on October 7. In that game Hairston set an NCAA record with 197 rushing yards in the first quarter alone. On the season, the three-time NEC Player of the Week award winner totaled eight 100-yard rushing games, four 200-yard games and one 300-yard game.

Disch is quickly becoming one of the most decorated players in NEC history. The 2004 NEC Rookie of the Year, Disch joins Sacred Heart's Kayode Mayowa (2000 and 2001) and Monmouth's Joe Sentipal (2002 and 2003) as two-time winners of the NEC Defensive Player of the Year award. He closed out his junior season as the third-leading tackler in the conference with 103 (47 solo) and stands 38th nationally with 9.4 stops per game. He ranks fourth on the circuit in tackles for loss (11.0) and forced fumbles (two). Disch, a North Plainfield product, also broke up four passes and recorded an interception.

Sinisi, who was named to the all-NEC second team, gave a boost to a well-balanced Monmouth offense and finished the regular season first among NEC freshman rushers and third overall with 716 yards on 4.4 yards per carry. He ranks second in the league in both scoring (78 points) and rushing touchdowns (12), and stands seventh in all-purpose yardage (984 yards). With a league-high five NEC Rookie of the Week awards to his credit - including three straight to close out the year - Sinisi also proved to be a multi-purpose threat out of the backfield with 18 catches for 268 yards and a touchdown. The Cedar Grove, NJ native also maintains the NCAA's longest current touchdown scoring streak, having reached the end zone at least once in all 11 games this year for the league champion Hawks. Sinisi is the lone freshman offensive player in the NEC to be recognized on one of the all-league teams.

(1-of-6 - 2006 NEC Football All-Conference Release)

Central Connecticut State University • Fairleigh Dickinson University • Long Island University
Monmouth University • Mount St. Mary's University • Quinnipiac University
Robert Morris University • Sacred Heart University • St. Francis (NY) College
Saint Francis (PA) University • Wagner College

Giddings, a cornerback, is the only freshman defender in the conference to earn all-NEC recognition with his selection to the second team. A two-time NEC Rookie of the Week, he finished the year tied for the league lead with three fumble recoveries. He also intercepted two passes, recorded five pass breakups, blocked a kick and compiled 39 tackles (21 solo). In a 33-21 win over Albany on October 7, he became the first player in NCAA history to return three fumbles in a game and the first since Alvin Nnabuife of SMU in 2004 to return two for touchdowns.

Now in his 14th season at Monmouth, Callahan has led the Hawks to five NEC championships since the inception of the league in 1996, including three of the last four years. This past season, the Hawks finished the regular season with a 10-1 record and will represent the NEC in the Gridiron Classic against Pioneer Football League champion San Diego on December 2. Monmouth is currently ranked 27th in the latest Sports Network I-AA poll and second in the Sports Network I-AA Mid-Major poll. Callahan, who is the only football coach in school history, has taken the Monmouth program to new heights in recent years, posting a 36-8 overall record the last four seasons and a 22-6 mark in NEC play.

Monmouth senior **Brian Boland (Brick, NJ/Brick Memorial)** makes his first appearance on the all-NEC first team at quarterback. He helped lead the Hawks to their first outright NEC Championship and third title overall since he has been the starting signal caller for the Hawks. Boland paced the NEC in total offense (223.4 ypg), ranked second in passing yardage per game (200.7 ypg) and third in pass efficiency (142.6). A three-time NEC Player of the Week winner, he completed a league-best 65.1 percent of his passes and finished the year with 2,208 yards through the air. Boland enters the postseason with 7,667 career passing yards, second in NEC history.

The league's top two rushers this season fill the first team all-conference running back slots for 2006 - CCSU's Hairston and Saint Francis (PA) senior **Todd Harris (Duquesne, PA/Duquesne)**. Harris is making his second straight appearance on the first team. He averaged 120.9 yards per game this season to rank second in the NEC in rushing and also finished second in all-purpose yards, averaging 138.1 per game. Harris accumulated 1,330 yards on the ground, averaging 4.8 yards per carry. Harris also stood third in the league in scoring (6.0 ppg) and recorded 11 rushing touchdowns this season. The senior standout closes his career at Saint Francis (PA) atop the Red Flash record books in rushing yards (3,414), rushing touchdowns (20) and all-purpose yards (4,253). He is also the third-leading rusher in NEC history.

Monmouth senior **Adam San Miguel (North Bergen, NJ/St. Peter's Prep)** and Saint Francis (PA) senior **Michael Caputo (Bethel Park, PA/Seton La Salle)** form the wide receiver tandem on the all-NEC first squad. San Miguel and Caputo rank one-two, respectively, in the league in receptions and receiving yards per game. San Miguel tops the NEC with 6.36 receptions and 78.7 yards per game, while totaling 866 receiving yards on 70 catches, including six touchdowns. He is third in the conference on the all-purpose yardage chart as well, averaging 107.8 ypg. San Miguel now ranks third on the Hawks' all-time receiving list with 141 catches. Caputo, making his second consecutive appearance on the first team, is right behind at 5.73 receptions and 77.9 yards per game. He scored eight touchdowns on the year and averaged 13.6 yards per catch with 857 yards on 63 receptions. Caputo is the NEC and Red Flash all-time leader with 245 receptions and 3,464 receiving yards.

Robert Morris senior **Jarvis Powers (Stafford, VA/Brooke Point)** earns first team honors at tight end. He ranked eighth in the league in receiving yards, averaging 38.3 ypg, and ninth in receptions, averaging 2.82 per contest. He had five touchdowns on the year and racked up 421 yards on 31 receptions.

Three returning all-stars make up the first team offensive line in 2006, including Albany senior **Jacob Anderson (West Seneca, NY/West Seneca West)**, Central Connecticut State junior **Ryne Nutt (Warren, OH/Howland)** and Monmouth senior **Matt Connolly (Hewitt, NJ/West Milford)**. Anderson and Nutt were both selected to the all-NEC second team in 2004, while Anderson (first team) and Connolly (second team) were both honored in 2005. The two remaining offensive line selections are Albany senior **Jacob Hobbs (Schenectady, NY/Schenectady)** and Monmouth senior **Jonathan Dunn (Blackwood, NJ/Washington Township)**. The Hawks' Connolly and Dunn worked together to protect fellow all-NEC first teamer Boland, who engineered the league's second-highest scoring offense. Nutt helped open holes for Hairston, the NEC Offensive Player of the Year, as part of the most prolific running attack in the league.

Seven returning all-stars make up the first team all-NEC defense, including 2005 first team defensive lineman **Andre Coleman (Buffalo, NY/Burgard)**, a senior, and 2005 second team honoree, junior defensive lineman **Michael Dungey (Rochester, NY/Irondequoit)**, both from Albany. The duo were vital cogs on a defense that ranked second in the league in points allowed (13.0 ppg). Coleman recorded six sacks to stand second in the league with 0.55 sacks per game, and also ranked third in tackles for loss (13.0 total/1.18 per game). He had 42 total tackles, including 22 solo, on the year. Dungey registered 34 total tackles (11 solo), eight of which were for losses and two sacks.

Senior defensive linemen **Matt Brunck (Pittsburgh, PA/Fox Chapel)** and **Ray Gensler (Pittsburgh, PA/Keystone Oaks)** of Robert Morris are making their first appearance on the all-NEC first team, helping bolster a Colonial defensive unit that permitted just 14.6 ppg to rank third in the league. Brunck averaged 6.7 tackles per game, while Gensler had 5.9 per game. Gensler led the NEC in sacks with 11.0 (1.00 pg) and tackles for loss (17.5). Brunck ranked second in the league with 13.5 tackles for negative yardage, and finished fifth in sacks with 4.5.

The all-NEC first team linebackers consist of two returning all-conference performers and one newcomer to postseason honors. Albany's Disch, who earned NEC Defensive Player of the Year plaudits, is joined by Monmouth senior and three-time honoree **Mike Castellano (Freehold, NJ/Freehold Township)** and Sacred Heart senior **Jon Corto (Orchard Park, NY/Orchard Park)**. Corto stands second in the league with 104 tackles (54 solo), an average of 9.5 per game. He recorded 4.5 sacks on the season and had 11.0 tackles for loss. Corto ranked fifth in the NEC in tackles for loss and sixth in sacks. Castellano ended the season 64 stops (38 solo) and picked off three passes.

Three of the four first team all-NEC defensive backs are returning honorees. Central Connect State senior **Farod Muhammad (Buffalo, NY/Hutchinson Central Tech)** and Wagner junior **Al Phillips (Hialeah, FL/American)** both make their second straight appearance on the first team, while Monmouth senior **Matt Hill (Hopatcong, NJ/Hopatcong)** makes the jump from the second team. Robert Morris senior **Mike Niklos (Columbus, OH/Bishop Watterson)** rounds out the first team defensive unit. Muhammad averaged 7.3 tackles per game for a total of 80 (45 solo) on the season. Niklos, Phillips and Hill all ranked in the top-five in the NEC in interceptions with Niklos standing second with five, Phillips in third with four and Hill in fifth with three. Hill boasted 74 tackles (44 solo) and also recovered a league-high three fumbles.

The special teams contingent on the all-conference first team is made up of Robert Morris junior return specialist **Mario Hines (Ecorse, MI/Ecorse)**, Albany sophomore punter **Chris Lynch (Lindenhurst, NY/Lindenhurst)** and Wagner sophomore kicker **Piotr Czech (Keyport, NJ/Keyport)**. All are first time honorees at their respective positions, although Czech makes his second appearance on the first team, after having earned honors as punter in 2005. Hines ranked second in the NEC in kick returns, averaging 24.5 yards per runback. He returned a total of 20 kicks for 490 yards. Lynch ranked second in the league in punting averaging 38.8 yards per punt and dropped 16 inside the 20-yard line. Czech converted 21-22 point after touchdown attempts for a 95.5 conversion percentage. He also connected on 9-15 field goal attempts, for a total of 48 points on the year. His 54-yard field goal against Sacred Heart on September 30th established a new Wagner and NEC record.

Stony Brook's offensive duo of quarterback **Josh Dudash (Beachwood, NJ/Toms River South)** and wide receiver **Lynell Suggs (Bronx, NY/Lehman)** capture second team honors this year. Suggs starred for the Seawolves this season, as almost half of Dudash's touchdown passes have went to him, including six in each of the final Seawolf games. Dudash finishes the season with 2,231 total yards and 15 touchdowns and Suggs has 38 catches good for 594 yards and seven touchdowns.

Wagner's **Chris Turner (Syracuse, NY/Henninger)** and **Jason Butler (Syracuse, NY/Henninger)** are also tabbed to the second team. Turner was previously a first team all-NEC recipient, being selected in 2004. The 6-4 wide receiver equaled the NEC record for career touchdown catches with 33, and now shares the mark with the Dallas Cowboys' Miles Austin (Monmouth, 2002-05). Throughout his career, the Syracuse, NY native hauled in 213 receptions for 2,853 yards and 33 touchdowns. A junior running back, Butler averaged 4.7 yards per carry while rushing for 735 yards this season.

Rookie phenom **David Sinisi (Cedar Grove, NJ/Cedar Grove)**, the 2006 NEC Offensive Rookie of the Year, ran for 716 yards and 12 touchdowns in his freshman campaign for Monmouth to garner second team honors.

In the league's most efficient passing game, Monmouth junior tight end **John Nalbhone (Lawrenceville, NJ/Lawrence)** was a reliable target. Nalbhone reeled in 17 catches for a total of 172 yards, an average of 10.1 yards per catch. Nalbhone was also a second team all-NEC selection during the 2005 season.

Up front from Albany, **Pierce Brennan (Lake Grove, NY/Sachem)** and **Sam Pagano (Schenectady, NY/Colonie Central)** anchored a line that boasted the third best rushing offense in the league with 1,835 total yards, good for 166.9 yards per game average.

At 6-6, 355 pounds, Saint Francis' **Derek Upersea (Pago Pago, American Samoa/Samoana)** is the largest front man on the second team. Upersea helped spearhead for Todd Harris' record-breaking season, as the Red Flash running back finished the year with 1,330 rushing yards, exceeding the program's single-season record of 1,174 - a mark that stood for nearly 30 years.

CCSU's **Rich Ranglin (Yonkers, NY/Saunders)** and RMU's **John Steilner (Elwood City, PA/Lincoln)** round out the 2006 All-NEC second team offensive line selections. This is Ranglin's second postseason honor, as he was also selected to the second team last season. Steilner was a part of a Robert Morris team that registered a five-win improvement (2-8 to 6-4) from last year.

Two key elements of a Monmouth defense that limited opponents to a league-low average of 11.4 points per game were defensive linemen **Brian Sweeney (Marlton, NJ/Cherokee)** and **Erik Yngstrom (Freehold, NJ/Freehold)**, each earning their first postseason honor. Defensive back **David Jiles (Paulsboro, NJ/Paulsboro)** landed Monmouth's final selection on the second team. An aggressive back, Jiles was a second team all-NEC pick last year, and finished the 2006 regular season with 41 tackles. Jiles was instrumental in a Hawk defense that finished with a margin of +7 in turnovers by contributing five interceptions and two forced fumbles.

Robert Morris' pass defense was the toughest in the league and is represented by four defenders on the all-NEC second team. Defensive lineman **Colyn Haugh (Murrysville, PA/Franklin Regional)**, unusually small and crafty for a lineman at 5-10, 240 pounds, finished the season with 48 tackles and five sacks. Perhaps the most impressive and constant parts of the league's best pass defense came from a pair of linebackers in **Jeff Rommes (Gibsonia, PA/Deer Lakes)** and **Chad Wengert (Kempton, PA/Kutztown)**. Wengert led RMU in tackles with 75 (34 solo). Rommes finished his career with 214 takedowns, good enough for ninth all-time at Robert Morris. The final piece of the Colonial second team all-NEC contingent is a member of their secondary, **James Kazil (Georgetown, PA/South Side)**. The 5-10, 180 pound defensive back recorded 60 tackles (22 solo) and added three interceptions and two fumble recoveries.

The most decorated member of the All-NEC second team is CCSU's **Devon Douglass (Baltimore, MD/Calvert Hall)**. A first team selection last season, this is the second time Douglass has been tabbed to the second team, as he previously earned the honor in 2004. Douglass was an integral part of a Blue Devil defense that allowed the second fewest rushing touchdowns in the NEC this year. The Blue Devils' **Chris Stimmel (Baltimore, MD/Cardinal Gibbons)**, a junior linebacker, was one of the league's top tacklers for loss with nine (six solo) and totalled 84 stops on the year. Rounding out CCSU's second team selections is defensive back **Anthony Wilson (Norwalk, CT/Brien McMahon)**. This is the second postseason honor for the 5-10, 175 pound sophomore, as he was also named to the second team last year as a freshman.

Rounding out the second team defensive is Stony Brook freshman defensive back **Cory Giddings (Ocean, NJ/Ocean Township)**. A two-time NEC Rookie of the Week honoree, Giddings made an immediate impact on the gridiron. As the NEC Defensive Rookie of the Year, he pulled down two interceptions, knocked away five passes, recovered three fumbles and blocked one kick.

NEC Special Teams Player of the Week honorees fill the All-NEC second team selections. Albany's **Jason Fralicker (North Tonawanda, NY/North Tonawanda)**, a two-time special teams player of the week selection, makes the team at kicker. Fralicker led the Great Danes in scoring with 64 points (13-19 FGs, 25-25 PATs), the ninth-best single-season total in school annals.

Also named first team at kicker, Wagner's **Piotr Czech (Keyport, NJ/Keyport)** emerges on the second team at punter. This is Czech's second consecutive postseason honor at punter, after he averaged 38.3 yards per punt. Entering the postseason honors for the first time, Albany's **Mike Wall (Syracuse, NY/Solvay)** is recognized as a return specialist. Wall tacked on 349 yards on 14 kick returns, an average of 24.9, with his long of 77 good for a touchdown.

2006 NEC Football Major Award Winners

Offensive Player of the Year

RB Justise Hairston Central Connecticut St. 6-1 210 Sr. New Britain, CT/New Britain/Rutgers

Defensive Player of the Year

LB Colin Disch Albany 6-1 210 Jr. North Plainfield, NJ/North Plainfield

Offensive Rookie of the Year

RB David Sinisi Monmouth 5-10 195 R-Fr. Cedar Grove, NJ/Cedar Grove

Defensive Rookie of the Year

DB Cory Giddings Stony Brook 6-0 170 Fr. Ocean, NJ/Ocean Township

Coach of the Year

Kevin Callahan Monmouth

2006 Football First Team All-NEC

Offense

Pos	Name	School	Ht	Wt	Yr	Hometown/High School
QB	Brian Boland	Monmouth	6-1	210	Sr.	Brick, NJ/Brick Memorial
RB	Justise Hairston	Central Connecticut St.	6-1	210	Sr.	New Britain, CT/New Britain
RB	Todd Harris	St. Francis (PA)	5-10	205	Sr.	Duquesne, PA/Duquesne
WR	Adam San Miguel	Monmouth	5-10	170	Sr.	North Bergen, NJ/St. Peter's Prep
WR	Michael Caputo	St. Francis (PA)	5-11	170	Sr.	Bethel Park, PA/Seton La Salle
TE	Jarvis Powers	Robert Morris	6-2	180	Sr.	Stafford, VA/Brooke Point
OL	Jacob Anderson	Albany	6-6	300	Sr.	West Seneca, NY/West Seneca West
OL	Jacob Hobbs	Albany	6-4	325	Sr.	Schenectady, NY/Schenectady
OL	Ryne Nutt	Central Connecticut St.	6-4	305	Jr.	Warren, OH/Howland
OL	Matt Connolly	Monmouth	6-5	250	Sr.	Hewitt, NJ/West Milford
OL	Jonathan Dunn	Monmouth	6-5	315	Sr.	Blackwood, NJ/Washington Township

Defense

Pos	Name	School	Ht	Wt	Yr	Hometown/High School
DL	Andre Coleman	Albany	6-4	290	Sr.	Buffalo, NY/Burgard
DL	Michael Dungey	Albany	6-2	275	Jr.	Rochester, NY/Irondequoit
DL	Matt Brunck	Robert Morris	6-2	255	Sr.	Pittsburgh, PA/Fox Chapel/IUP
DL	Ray Gensler	Robert Morris	6-0	220	Sr.	Pittsburgh, PA/Keystone Oaks
LB	Mike Castellano	Monmouth	6-2	235	Sr.	Freehold, NJ/Freehold Township
LB	Colin Disch	Albany	6-1	210	Jr.	North Plainfield, NJ/North Plainfield
LB	Jon Corto	Sacred Heart	6-1	195	Sr.	Orchard Park, NY/Orchard Park
DB	Farod Muhammad	Central Connecticut St.	5-11	175	Sr.	Buffalo, NY/Hutchinson Central Tech
DB	Al Phillips	Wagner	5-11	175	Jr.	Hialeah, FL/American
DB	Matt Hill	Monmouth	6-0	210	Sr.	Hopatcong, NJ/Hopatcong
DB	Mike Niklos	Robert Morris	5-10	175	Sr.	Columbus, OH/Bishop Watterson

Special Teams

Pos	Name	School	Ht	Wt	Yr	Hometown/High School
PK	Piotr Czech	Wagner	6-5	210	So.	Keyport, NJ/Keyport
P	Chris Lynch	Albany	6-3	215	So.	Lindenhurst, NY/Lindenhurst
RS	Mario Hines	Robert Morris	5-11	175	Jr.	Ecorse, MI/Ecorse

2006 Football Second Team All-NEC

Offense

Pos	Name	School	Ht	Wt	Yr	Hometown/High School
QB	Josh Dudash	Stony Brook	6-2	214	Jr.	Beachwood, NJ/Toms River South
RB	Jason Butler	Wagner	6-1	190	Jr.	Syracuse, NY/Henninger
RB	David Sinisi	Monmouth	5-10	195	R-Fr.	Cedar Grove, NJ/Cedar Grove
WR	Lynell Suggs	Stony Brook	6-2	177	So.	Bronx, NY/Lehman
WR	Chris Turner	Wagner	6-4	220	Sr.	Syracuse, NY/Henninger
TE	John Nalbone	Monmouth	6-4	240	Jr.	Lawrenceville, NJ/Lawrence
OL	Pierce Brennan	Albany	6-1	275	Sr.	Lake Grove, NY/Sachem
OL	Sam Pagano	Albany	6-3	305	Jr.	Schenectady, NY/Colonie Central
OL	Rich Ranglin	Central Connecticut St.	6-2	315	Sr.	Yonkers, NY/Saunders
OL	John Steilner	Robert Morris	6-1	270	Jr.	Ellwood City, PA/Lincoln
OL	Derek Upersea	Saint Francis (PA)	6-6	355	Jr.	Pago Pago, American Samoa/Samoana

Defense

Pos	Name	School	Ht	Wt	Yr	Hometown/High School
DL	Devon Douglass	Central Connecticut St.	6-1	275	Sr.	Baltimore, MD/Calvert Hall
DL	Colyn Haugh	Robert Morris	5-10	240	Sr.	Murrysville, PA/Franklin Regional
DL	Brian Sweeney	Monmouth	6-2	250	Sr.	Marlton, NJ/Cherokee
DL	Erik Yngstrom	Monmouth	6-2	250	Sr.	Freehold, NJ/Freehold
LB	Jeff Rommes	Robert Morris	6-0	200	Sr.	Gibsonia, PA/Deer Lakes
LB	Chris Stimmel	Central Connecticut St.	6-2	210	Jr.	Baltimore, MD/Cardinal Gibbons
LB	Chad Wengert	Robert Morris	6-0	240	Jr.	Kempton, PA/Kutztown
DB	David Jiles	Monmouth	5-9	185	Sr.	Paulsboro, NJ/Paulsboro
DB	Anthony Wilson	Central Connecticut St.	5-9	175	So.	Norwalk, CT/Brien McMahon
DB	James Kazil	Robert Morris	5-10	180	Jr.	Georgetown, PA/South Side
DB	Cory Giddings	Stony Brook	6-0	170	Fr.	Ocean, NJ/Ocean Township

Special Teams

Pos	Name	School	Ht	Wt	Yr	Hometown/High School
PK	Jason Fralicker	Albany	5-10	182	Jr.	North Tonawanda, NY/North Tonawanda
PK	Piotr Czech	Wagner	6-5	210	Jr.	Keyport, NJ/Keyport
RS	Mike Wall	Albany	5-8	180	Jr.	Syracuse, NY/Solvay