

# **ACADEMIC ALL-AMERICA® TEAM**

**S E L E C T E D   B Y   C O S I D A**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **2004 Academic All-America® Basketball Team Announced**

*UConn's Emeka Okafor Named Academic All-America® of the Year for the University Division*

**STAMFORD, Conn., March 3, 2004** – CoSIDA released today the 2004 Academic All-America Basketball Team. Emeka Okafor (Houston, TX) of the University of Connecticut, a first team Academic All-America® selection for the second straight year, was named Academic All-America of the Year for the University Division.

A junior with a 3.76 grade point average in Finance, Okafor leads the nation in blocked shots and has a nation's best 19 double-doubles during the 2003 – 04 season. At 6'10", he averages 19.3 points per game and is the 14<sup>th</sup> player in NCAA Division I history with more than 400 career blocks.

"It is an honor to be recognized as the Academic All-America of the Year," said Emeka Okafor. "My parents always taught me to make the most of my opportunities, whether it is in the classroom, on the court or in anything I do. This is a reflection of what you can achieve through that hard work. It is also a tribute to the support that we receive at Connecticut to be the best that we can be."

University of Connecticut's head coach, Jim Calhoun, agrees. "Emeka Okafor is everything that college athletics is supposed to be about. This award is a reward for the effort and dedication that he applies to every part of his life and we could not be prouder of him."

Joining Okafor on the University Division first team is Michigan State's Chris Hill (Indianapolis, IN), who leads the Big Ten in 3-point field goals made per game (2.81) and is second in 3-point field goal percentage (44.5). Hill carries a 3.84 grade point average as a Finance major. Last year, he was a third team Academic All-America selection.

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*AAA Men's Basketball*

Adam Mark (Bremen, IN), a three-time Academic All-America from Belmont, William & Mary's Adam Hess (Grosse Pointe, MI), who leads the CAA in scoring, and Hawaii guard Michael Kuebler (Salem, OR) round out the University division first team.

Nick Branting of University of Nebraska-Kearney earned Academic All-America® of the Year honors for the College Division. A two-time Academic All-America, Branting leads the Lopers in points, rebounds and blocks. He holds a 3.94 grade point average in Biology and is a Nebraska State Finalist for a 2004 Rhodes Scholarship.

"I'm very honored and humbled to be selected as the College Division Team Member of the Year," said Nick Branting. "I know the time and effort it takes to succeed on and off the court so everyone that has made the Academic All-America Team should truly feel honored."

The only three-time Academic All-America in the College Division is Emory & Henry's Justin Call. A member of the Sigma Mu National Honor Society and team captain, Call leads the conference and ranks fifth nationally with a 23.9 scoring average.

Also named to the College Division first team were Dennis Stanton from Ursinus, Missouri-Rolla's Brian Westre and Jerett Skrifvars of Montana State-Billings.

The G.P.A. average of the University and College Divisions combined is 3.80, which includes four 4.00 GPA's by Skrifvars, Derek Winans of Southeast Missouri State, Hokies' Johannes Herber and Jay Brogden, Hardings second team Academic All-America from Cherokee Village, Arkansas.

"The Academic All-America® Teams program promotes the importance of balancing academics and athletics among college student-athletes. Sports information directors take pride in recognizing those who strive to achieve balanced excellence both academically and athletically in their college careers," says Academic All-America Chairperson, Dick Lipe, of Bentley College.

The complete list of student-athletes named to the 2004 Academic All-America Basketball Team is attached (See Attachment A).

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*AAA Men's Basketball*

The Academic All-America® Teams program honors 816 male and female student-athletes annually who have succeeded at the highest level on the playing field and in the classroom. Individuals are selected through voting by CoSIDA, the College Sports Information Directors of America; a 2,000 –member organization consisted of sports public relations professionals for colleges and universities in the United States and Canada.

To be eligible, a student-athlete must be a varsity starter or key reserve, maintain a cumulative G.P.A. of 3.20 on a scale of 4.00, have reached sophomore athletics and academic standing at his/her current institution and be nominated by his/her sports information director. Since the program's inception in 1952, CoSIDA has bestowed Academic All-America honors on more than 14,000 student-athletes in Division I, II, III and NAIA covering all NCAA championship sports.

For more information about the Academic All-America Teams program, please visit [www.cosida.com](http://www.cosida.com) or email [academicallamerica@millsport.com](mailto:academicallamerica@millsport.com).

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## **S E L E C T E D   B Y   C O S I D A**

### **2004 Academic All-America® Men's Basketball Team (University Division)**

#### **First Team**

<b>Name</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Hometown</b>	<b>GPA</b>	<b>Major</b>
Adam Hess	William & Mary	Sr.	Grosse Pointe, MI	3.53	Finance
Chris Hill	Michigan State	Jr.	Indianapolis, IN	3.84	Finance
Michael Kuebler	Hawaii	Sr.	Salem, OR	3.67	Business Administration
Adam Mark	Belmont	Sr.	Bremen, IN	3.96	Computer Science
Emeka Okafor*	Connecticut	Jr.	Houston, TX	3.74	Finance

#### **Second Team**

<b>Name</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Hometown</b>	<b>GPA</b>	<b>Major</b>
Clint Cuffle	Evansville	Sr.	Riverton, IL	3.75	Civil Engineering
Jason Parker	Tulsa	Sr.	Tulsa, OK	3.52	Management Information Systems
Brett Starkey	Denver	Grad.	Lakewood, CO	3.96	Biology/Pre-Med
Blake Stepp	Gonzaga	Sr.	Eugene, OR	3.24	Business Administration
Derek Winans	Southeast Missouri St	Jr.	East Cape Girardeau, IL	4.00	Business Mgmt

#### **Third Team**

<b>Name</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Hometown</b>	<b>GPA</b>	<b>Major</b>
Adam Baumann	Youngstown State	Sr.	Scottsdale, AZ	3.80	Management Information Systems
Brody Deren	Creighton	Sr.	Harlan, IA	3.66	Exercise Science
Craig Forth	Syracuse	Jr.	East Greenbush, NY	3.85	Inclusive Education and Geography
Johannes Herber	West Virginia	Soph.	Darmstadt, Germany	4.00	Political Science
Michael Lindeman	Creighton	Grad.	Iowa Falls, IA	3.94	Finance

#### **\*Academic All-America® Team Member of the Year (University Division)**

**Emeka Okafor, University of Connecticut**



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## **2004 Academic All-America® Men's Basketball Team (College Division)**

### **First Team**

<b>Name</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Hometown</b>	<b>GPA</b>	<b>Major</b>
Nick Branting**	Nebraska-Kearney	Sr.	North Platte, NE	3.94	Biology
Justin Call	Emory & Henry	Sr.	Ronda, NC	3.74	Business/Economics
Jerett Skrifvars	Montana State-Billings	Sr.	Brea, CA	4.00	Information Systems
Dennis Stanton	Ursinus	Sr.	North Wales, PA	3.62	English
Brian Westre	Missouri-Rolla	Sr.	Clayton, MO	3.83	Engineering Management

### **Second Team**

<b>Name</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Hometown</b>	<b>GPA</b>	<b>Major</b>
Josh Allen	Alderson-Broadus	Sr.	Crab Orchard, WV	3.83	Athletic Training
Jay Brogdon	Harding	Sr.	Cherokee Village, AK	4.00	Management
Michael Patrick	Wheeling-Jesuit	Sr.	Perry, OH	3.94	Management
Matt Schlingman	Wooster	Jr.	Ashland, OH	3.98	Mathematics
Tommy Stolhandske	Texas Lutheran	Sr.	San Antonio, TX	3.68	Kinesiology

### **Third Team**

<b>Name</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Hometown</b>	<b>GPA</b>	<b>Major</b>
J.D. Byers	Lebanon Valley	Jr.	Westminster, MD	3.84	Business
Bryan Depew	Whitworth	Sr.	Spokane, WA	3.46	Business/Accounting
Rob Hennigan	Emerson	Sr.	Worcester, MA	3.71	Broadcast Journalism
Matt Hopf	Milwaukee School Of Engineering	Sr.	Howard's Grove, WI	3.94	Architectural Engineering
Brandon Randall	Hampden-Sydney	Sr.	Williamsburg, VA	3.98	Physics

### **\*\*Academic All-America® Team Member of the Year (College Division)**

**Nick Branting, University of Nebraska-Kearney**