

**For Immediate Release**

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***Diverse: Issues In Higher Education announces 2016 Arthur Ashe Jr. Sports Scholar Semi-Finalists***

FAIRFAX, Va. — *Diverse: Issues In Higher Education* magazine has announced the Top 15 male and female semi-finalists for the 2016 Arthur Ashe Jr. Sports Scholar Award.

The winners will be profiled in the April 21, 2016, edition of *Diverse*. The semi-finalists were chosen from more than 1,000 outstanding minority student-athletes nominated by their respective institutions.

The top 15 male and female semi-finalists are:

**Male Semi-Finalists**

- **Deyshawn Bond**, Football, University of Cincinnati
- **Corey Brown**, Soccer, Queens University of Charlotte
- **Tim Crawley**, Football, San Jose State University
- **Ryan Ghaderi**, Lacrosse, Siena College
- **Charles Holliday**, Swimming & Diving, University of Iowa
- **Nick Kelly**, Football, Arizona State University
- **James Lee**, Golf, Rice University
- **D. Carrington Motley**, Track & Field, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- **Marcus Paige**, Basketball, Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- **Paul Pitts III**, Football, San Diego State University
- **Alex Poythress**, Basketball, University of Kentucky
- **Varun Ram**, Basketball, University of Maryland, College Park
- **Luis Ramirez**, Soccer, University of Louisville
- **Brian Randolph**, Football, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- **Stephen Tan**, Volleyball, New York University

**Female Semi-Finalists**

- **Julia Abelsky**, Fencing, Northwestern University
- **Andraya Carter**, Basketball, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- **Alyssa Domico**, Softball, Dominican University
- **Elicia Garcia**, Field Hockey, University of Louisville
- **Ashley Holdridge**, Lacrosse, Siena College
- **Jasmine Jackson**, Volleyball, Delaware State University
- **Jaida Lawrence**, Gymnastics, West Virginia University

- **Elizabeth Means**, Tennis, Florida Gulf Coast University
- **Nandi Mehta**, Soccer, Northwestern University
- **Sunita Mengers**, Soccer, Univ. of Maryland, Baltimore County
- **Minori Minagawa**, Track/Cross Country, The Ohio State University
- **Brianna Morgan**, Tennis, University of Florida
- **Megan Pinkerton**, Lacrosse, Temple University
- **Natilee Ruiz**, Swimming & Diving, San Diego State University
- **Canessa Swanson**, Softball, Jackson State University

In 1992, *Black Issues In Higher Education* magazine, now *Diverse*, established the Sports Scholars Awards to honor undergraduate students of color who exemplify the standards set by tennis great Arthur Ashe Jr.

A scholar and athlete, Ashe sought to expand opportunities for young people. Each year *Diverse* invites every postsecondary institution in the country to participate in this awards program by nominating their outstanding sports scholars. In addition to their athletic ability, students named Arthur Ashe Jr. Sports Scholars must exhibit academic excellence as well as community activism.

To be included, students have to compete in an intercollegiate sport; maintain a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.2; and be active on their campuses or in their communities. The NCAA Office of Inclusion has partnered with *Diverse* to support this standout class of scholar athletes. Approximately 1,000 male and female students from across the country were nominated.

Past recipients of the award include: Baylor University's (2011) Robert Griffin III, Heisman Trophy winner and former Washington Redskins quarterback; the University of Tennessee's (2003) Kara Lawson, ESPN analyst who played for the WNBA's Sacramento Monarchs; San Diego State University's (1993) Marshall Faulk, NFL Hall of Famer; and the University of Kansas' (1996) Jaque Vaughn, head coach of the NBA's Orlando Magic.

*Diverse: Issues In Higher Education* is the nation's only news magazine dedicated exclusively to diversity issues in higher education. Visit [www.DiverseEducation.com](http://www.DiverseEducation.com)

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