

## Western Collegiate Hockey Association

### Bruce M. McLeod

Commissioner

### Carol LaBelle-Ehrhardt

Assistant Commissioner of Operations

### Sara R. Martin

Associate Commissioner

### Greg Shepherd

Supervisor of Officials

### Administrative Office

Western Collegiate Hockey Association

MSC 8302, University of Denver

2211 S. Josephine Street

Denver, CO 80210

p: 303 871-4491. f: 303 871-4770

email: clabelle@wcha.com

### Doug Spencer

Associate Commissioner for Public

Relations

### Women's Administrative Office and WCHA Public Relations Office

Western Collegiate Hockey Association

559 D'Onofrio Drive, Ste. 103

Madison, WI 53719-2096

p: 608 829-0100. f: 608 829-0200

email: dspencer@mailbag.com

### 37-Time Men's Division 1 National Champions

1952, 1953, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958,  
1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964,  
1965, 1966, 1968, 1969, 1973, 1974,  
1975, 1976, 1977, 1979, 1980, 1981,  
1982, 1983, 1987, 1990, 1991, 1997,  
2000, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006,  
2011

### 12-Time Women's Division 1 National Champions

2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005,  
2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011

### Men's WCHA Members

University of Alaska Anchorage

Bemidji State University

Colorado College

University of Denver

Michigan Tech University

University of Minnesota

University of Minnesota Duluth

Minnesota State University

University of Nebraska Omaha

University of North Dakota

St. Cloud State University

University of Wisconsin

### Women's WCHA Members

Bemidji State University

University of Minnesota

University of Minnesota Duluth

Minnesota State University

University of North Dakota

Ohio State University

St. Cloud State University

University of Wisconsin

**wcha.com**



June 7, 2011/For Immediate Release

## UMD's Schmidt, UM's Blankenship, SCSU's Josefson Named Recipients of WCHA Post-Graduate Scholarships for 2011-12

MADISON, Wis. – The Western Collegiate Hockey Association today (June 7, 2011) announced that seniors **Kyle Schmidt** of the University of Minnesota Duluth, **Kelli Blankenship** of the University of Minnesota and **Courtney Josefson** of St. Cloud State University are the recipients of the annual WCHA Post-Graduate Scholarships for 2011-12.

"It is with great admiration that we announce the WCHA Post-Graduate Scholarship winners for 2011-12," said Commissioner Bruce M. McLeod and Associate Commissioner Sara R. Martin in a joint statement. "These three outstanding student-athletes continue the tradition of excellence established by our previous post-graduate scholarship recipients and they represent the very best of collegiate athletics.

"The Western Collegiate Hockey Association is most fortunate to have had Kyle, Kelli and Courtney competing in the league at a high level the past four

seasons – both in the classroom and on the ice – at their respective schools and today we salute their tremendous accomplishments. On behalf of the entire WCHA family, we all wish them all the best in their future endeavors and we have no doubt each of them will achieve measurable success in their lifetimes."

An advocate of excellence both on and off the ice for student-athletes, the WCHA first announced the annual men's and women's post-graduate scholarship program in April of 2003, with the initial recipients named after the 2003-04 academic year. The WCHA Post-Graduate Scholarships are grants of \$10,000 each that are presented annually to a male and female student-athlete for post-graduate studies. Blankenship and Josefson are co-recipients and each will receive a grant of \$5,000.

Schmidt (Hermantown, MN) was a four-year competitor and forward for Minnesota Duluth, compiling a 3.64 undergraduate grade-point average, earning WCHA Scholar-Athlete honors and All-WCHA Academic Team honors three times (2009, 2010, 2011) while playing in 127 collegiate games for the Bulldogs. He has earned a Bachelor of Science degree at UMD while majoring in Mathematics: Stats & Actuarial Science. Over his collegiate hockey career, he compiled 26 goals, 20 assists and 46 career points, with his best season coming as a senior in 2010-11 when he produced 22 points (11g, 11a) in 35 games while helping the Bulldogs capture the NCAA Men's Frozen Four (national) championship in Saint Paul, Minn. He scored the game-winning goal in the national championship game against Michigan, was named MVP of the Frozen Four and was also honored nationally with the Derek Hines Unsung Hero Award from the Hockey Commissioners' Association.

Minnesota Duluth head coach Scott Sandelin, who watched Schmidt develop and mature



**Kyle Schmidt, UMD**



**Kelli Blankenship, UM**



**Courtney Josefson, SCSU**

as a student-athlete, player and person, said "Kyle has been an integral part of the UMD hockey program for four years. He is a very intelligent student and an energetic player with speed and a knack for scoring goals that is well-liked by his teammates, teachers and our community.

"Each year he has worked hard and succeeded at improving his game. He is the type of person that is not only a good student along with being athletically gifted but maybe more importantly, Kyle is willing to work to accomplish his goals. Whenever there has been a challenge put in front of him he has responded with work and smarts to find a way to achieve that goal. His character is first class as he is a respectful and honest person."

When asked to describe the graduate program he will follow and information on his future plans, Schmidt said, "The Master's degree that I will pursue is Computational and Applied Mathematics (with an emphasis in statistics). I have always enjoyed working with numbers and solving problems and this is the natural progression in education following my statistics and actuarial science major. Upon completion of my Master's degree, I am planning on pursuing a career in medical research statistics. This type of work enables hospitals to turn their statistical data into meaningful information they can use to help diagnose and treat patients. I would love knowing that the work I'm performing is helping others on their road to recovery."

Nominating Schmidt for the WCHA Post-Graduate Scholarship was Dr. Al Mensinger, Faculty Representative at UMD and Professor in the Department of Biology.

"It is my pleasure to nominate Kyle Schmidt for the WCHA Post-Graduate Scholarship," said Mensinger. "Mr. Schmidt has been a valuable member of the Bulldogs the past four seasons and is graduating in eight semesters with a Mathematics degree in Statistics and Actuarial Science. This is a challenging major and Kyle is the first athlete I have known that has gotten A's in Calculus I, II, and III and he has made the Dean's list every semester. Mr. Schmidt is an outstanding citizen and has been active in community service. He has participated in a number of events with the athletic department such as the Big Jig ice fishing tournament and Skate with the Bulldogs. He frequently visits local elementary schools where he reads to the lower grades. He has completed an 18 month internship with Northwestern Mutual and is a member of the UMD Actuarial club."

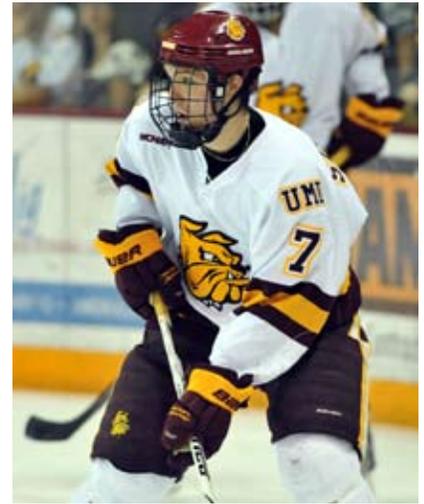
Blankenship (Lusby, MD) played four years for the Minnesota Golden Gophers from 2006-10. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology-Exercise Science, owned a cumulative grade point average of 3.474, earned recognition on UM's Dean's List, and was honored as a All-WCHA Academic Team member three times. Her four years on the ice as a forward encompassed 148 games and resulted in 28 goals, 33 assists and 61 points. She was also a two-time NCAA Women's Frozen Four participant with the Gophers.

Said her head coach, Brad Frost, "Kelli is the definition of a student-athlete. Academics was always just as important to her as athletics. On the ice, she was never our leading scorer but she played a vital role in our team's success. She was fast, smooth and a threat when she was on the ice; she always played her best in the big games.

"Kelli is one of the greatest success stories we've every had at Minnesota. She has struggled with dyslexia and perfectionism throughout her life and almost wasn't admitted to UM. But she put aside those worries and earned a 4.0 her first semester. She then carried that momentum and hard work on throughout her college career and is now about to start Dental school. Who would have thought that Kelli would be where she is today? I believe Kelli did."

Said Elizabeth Eull, Senior Associate Athletics Director at Minnesota, "Kelli is a dedicated, focused, and caring student-athlete who will excel at anything she sets her mind to. She has a clear vision of her future in working in the dental industry and her goals will be accomplished by her commitment to academic excellence. Kelli has an impressive line up of regular volunteering, representing the Golden Gophers in area elementary schools and community centers promoting healthy lifestyles and the importance of education to youth. She is an ambassador of what we admire in student-athletes."

Of her future plans, Blankenship said, "I have been accepted into the dental hygiene program at UM but I also plan to apply for my Master's in the newly-created profession of Dental Therapy. I have a passion for dentistry and as a dental therapist or hygienist



Minnesota Duluth's Kyle Schmidt



Minnesota's Kelli Blankenship



St. Cloud State's Courtney Josefson

I would serve low-income and under served patients. I want to make a difference in the community by serving people who are in need of oral care and education. This summer I also plan to apply for a teaching assistant position for the Upward Bound program due to my passion for education. This WCHA Post-Graduate Scholarship is a wonderful chance for me to receive something special and in return to give back by helping someone else attain his or her dreams.”

Nominating Blankenship for the WCHA Post-Graduate Scholarship was Dr. Perry Leo, Professor in Aerospace Engineering and Mechanics at UM. “As Faculty Athletic Representative, I have gotten to know many student-athletes and I am tremendously impressed with their ability to balance academics with athletics as well as with their desire to start a profession and make the world a better place,” said Leo. “Kelly is at the top of my list; she is a dedicated and driven student-athlete who has excelled during her time at the University of Minnesota. I have no doubt she will succeed and she has a strong desire to learn and a caring spirit. She has had a positive impact on her community, an unwavering commitment to athletics and a clear desire to make things better for others.”

Josefson (Bemidji, MN) graduated from St. Cloud State University in May with a Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education and Health, compiling a cumulative grade-point average of 3.88. She was three times honored as a WCHA Scholar-Athlete (2008, 2009 and 2010) and three times earned All-WCHA Academic Team accolades. At SCSU, she earned SCSU Honor's Scholarship honors in 2007-08, SCSU Scholarship honors from 2008-11, and a Hart Education Scholarship in 2010-11. As a player, she saw action in 112 collegiate games as a member of the Huskies from 2007-11, lacing up the skates in all 35 games as a senior.

St. Cloud State head coach Jeff Giesen said of Josefson, “Courtney served as an alternate captain for us. She is the true definition of a student-athlete. She has very strong leadership skills both on and off the ice. She is the president of our SAAC here at SCSU as well as completing her Physical Education teaching degree in four years which is very difficult while competing in athletics.

“Courtney was one of our hardest workers on and off the ice. She understood her roll and led by example. She became a very good, vocal leader in her senior season. It did not always come easy for her on the ice but she worked through the ups and downs and kept a positive attitude. She always presents herself very well, is very sociable and makes a good first impression. She is going to be a great teacher one day and is a true example of what we want Husky hockey players to be.”

As for her post-undergraduate plans, Josefson said, “I look to pursue a graduate degree from Minnesota State University, Mankato. I plan to earn a license in the developmental adapted physical education (DAPE) Master's program. The DAPE program will provide me with the latest advances in physical education for students with adapted needs. I am confident that the opportunities the program has to offer will be beneficial and rewarding. With this license, I will be more marketable as a future educator and I will be able to work with all of my students in the classroom without needed assistance from other certified instructors.”

Josefson was nominated for the WCHA Post-Graduate Scholarship by SCSU Faculty Athletic Representative Dr. Bill Hudson, Professor of Finance. “I have known Courtney for her entire four years at St. Cloud State,” said Hudson. “I have come to know her as an exceptional person and student-athlete. While playing Division 1 hockey and earning a remarkably high grade-point average of 3.88, Courtney found time to participate in numerous community service activities. She served as a volunteer coach for the St. Cloud Ice Breakers girls hockey team along with numerous other community fund raisers and community outreach programs.”

## **History of the WCHA Post-Graduate Scholarship**

The original announcement of the WCHA Post-Graduate Scholarship program, in 2003, was made jointly by P.J. Hill, then Chair of the Association and Faculty Representative from the University of Alaska Anchorage and WCHA Commissioner Bruce McLeod. In announcing the post-graduate scholarship program, Hill said, “This represents another positive step forward for the Western Collegiate Hockey Association in the area and recognition of academic achievement. We are extremely proud of the excellent reputation our member institutions have in both athletics and academics, and this new post-graduate scholarship program will only enhance that.”

The first winners of the men's and women's WCHA's Post-Graduate Scholarship in 2003-04 were Mike Colgan of Colorado College and Michelle McAteer of the University of Minnesota Duluth.

Following is an outline of the WCHA's post-graduate scholarship program: Criteria: 1. the nominee must graduate by the end of the academic year (or by the end of the summer) and must have earned at least a 3.0 grade-point average. 2. the nominee must have competed in the WCHA for at least three years.

Nominating Process: A student-athlete must be nominated by the Faculty Athletics Representative. Nominations are due April 15th.

Selection Process: Scholarship recipients and alternates will be selected by a vote of an Association Committee composed of five Faculty Athletics Representatives. The Association selection committee(s) will review and make the final selections. The committee(s) may select one male and one female winner annually to receive the WCHA post-graduate scholarship, as well as an alternate for each scholarship. Selections will be made by the committee by May 15th.

Process Following Nomination and Selection: Following notification, the award winners have until July 1 to accept, in writing, the scholarship. Announcements will be made at the kick-off event at the student-athlete recipient's home venue the following fall.

The winners must enroll in graduate school within five years of graduation. Designated full-time enrollment (post-graduate degree hours) shall be required and verification from the program director must be presented to the Conference office before the award shall be presented. The scholarship money will be sent directly to the post-graduate institution.

### **WCHA Post-Graduate Scholarship Recipients**

#### **2003-04**

Men's – Mike Colgan, Colorado College

Women's – Michelle McAteer, University of Minnesota Duluth

#### **2004-05**

Men's – Reid Goolsby, Colorado College

Women's – Emma Laaksonen, Ohio State University

#### **2005-06**

Men's – Jake Brandt, University of North Dakota

Women's – Kelsey Bills, University of Minnesota

#### **2006-07**

Men's – Ted O'Leary, University of Denver

Women's – Meghan Mutrie, University of North Dakota

#### **2007-08**

Men's – Nate Raduns, St. Cloud State University

Women's – Denelle Maguet, St. Cloud State University

#### **2008-09**

Men's – Andrew Thomas, University of Denver.

Women's – Laura Fast, St. Cloud State University

#### **2009-10**

Men's – Jake Gannon, Colorado College

Women's – Myriam Trepanier, University of Minnesota Duluth

#### **2010-11**

Men's – Eli Vlasisavljevich, Michigan Technological University

Women's – Caitlin Hogan, St. Cloud State University

#### **2011-12**

Men's – Kyle Schmidt, University of Minnesota Duluth

Women's (co) – Kelli Blankenship, University of Minnesota and Courtney Josefson, St. Cloud State University