

PRESS RELEASE

May 8, 2013

ESSEX COUNTY FREEHOLDERS HONOR THE MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM FOR ITS OUTSTANDING SEASON

(Newark, NJ) – The Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders honored the Montclair State University Women's Basketball Team for its outstanding 2012-13 season during the Wednesday, May 7, 2013, meeting at the Hall of Records. The Board's Commendation was sponsored and presented by Freeholder Brendan Gill of Montclair.



Members of the Montclair State University Women's Basketball Team were honored by the Board during its May 7th meeting at the Hall of Records. The players are pictured above with Freeholder Brendan Gill of Montclair (front row, far left), Freeholder D. Bilal Beasley of Irvington (front row, far right), Head Coach Karin Harvey (front row, 2nd from right), Assistant Coach Devin Feeney (2nd row, far right), and Freeholder Gerald Owens of South Orange (back row, center). Photo by Glen Frieson

Freeholder Gill opened the program by saying, "Tonight it is my pleasure to present this commendation to the Montclair State Women's Basketball Team, the Red Hawks, who, in my opinion, haven't received nearly the attention they deserve for their unbelievable season." He also joked that perhaps because his athletic career ended when he was cut from the Montclair H. S. JV basketball team, "I take special pride in being able to award athletic accomplishments by student-athletes, because you have a greater effect on the community than you will ever know, especially children, and that was the case throughout the entire community of Montclair and Essex County, including my 4 ½ -year old son and 16-month old daughter, who really enjoyed watching several of your games this season."

The Montclair State University Women's Basketball Team enjoyed one of the finest seasons in school history by finishing its regular season undefeated, 25-0, including a perfect record of 16-0 in the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) regular season, before going on to capture the NJAC Tournament

Championship for only the second time in school history (the first time since 1995) by defeating Rutgers-Newark (83-55) and then William Paterson University (75-54). The team then competed in the NCAA Division 3 Championship Tournament for the first time in 18 years, where it won first and second round games against Regis College (87-47) and Lebanon Valley College (71-51) to reach the “Sweet 16” for the first time in program history, before falling to Christopher Newport University.

The Red Hawks completed their season with a sterling 29-1 record, setting school records for most victories (29) and longest winning streak (29), and also tying New Jersey women’s collegiate basketball records for both winning percentage (.967) and winning streak. They were ranked in the *USA Today Sports/Women’s Basketball Coaches Association* (WBCA) Division 3 Top 25 for all but three weeks of the season, and reached as high as #7 after capturing the NJAC title.

The team’s accomplishments were accentuated by individual honors for four of the players, as well as the head coach: Melissa Tobie was named NJAC “Player of the Year” and to the D3News, D3Hoops and WBCA All-American teams; Shalette Brown was named the NJAC and D3Hoops “Rookie of the Year”, and to the D3News All-Freshman Team; Taylor Jeffers was named to the First Team All-NJAC Conference; Nicosia Henry was named the NJAC “Defensive Player of the Year”; and Head Coach Karin Harvey was named the “Coach of the Year” for the All-Met Division III, WBCA Region 2, D3Hoops Atlantic Region and New Jersey Athletic Conference.

The Montclair State University Women’s Basketball Team was comprised of the following members: Senior Taylor Jeffers; Juniors Jenny Malone, Nicosia Henry, Sarah Kluth and Alanna Loyle; Sophomores Janitza Aquino and Melissa Tobie; and Freshmen Kelly Williams, Shalette Brown, Vicky Beneventine, Kayla Ceballos, Sandra Gee, Jen Kuczynski and Jordyn Stanley. The team was coached by Head Coach Karin Harvey, Associate Head Coach Courtney Cunningham, Assistant Coaches Brian Sansom and Deonna Overton, and Student Assistant Coach Devin Feeney.

Head Coach Karin Harvey thanked Freeholder Gill and the entire Board, saying, “This is a tremendous honor for us to be here.” She also spoke glowingly of her team and their season, adding, “We have a great group of young women who are not only wonderful basketball players and great people, but also tremendous scholar-athletes, with a team GPA of well over 3.0.”

The team also received administrative support from President Dr. Susan A. Cole; Karen Pennington, Vice President for Student Development & Campus Life; and Holly Gera, Director of Athletics.

On behalf of her teammates, sophomore captain Melissa Tobie presented Freeholder Gill with a game ball signed by the entire team, as well as bright red “Montclair State University” t-shirts for the other eight members of the Board. The team was also accompanied by Shivaun Gaines, Director of Government Relations at Montclair State.

The Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders is the legislative body of Essex County government, and is comprised of nine members, four of whom are elected at large, and five of whom represent geographic districts. Freeholder Brendan Gill of Montclair is currently serving his first term as District 5 Freeholder, and he represents the five towns of Belleville, Bloomfield, Glen Ridge, Montclair and Nutley.

For Additional Information:
Gary Kroessig, Public Information
Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders
973-621-4452
Gkroessig@freeholders.essexcountynj.org